CLASSROOM CONDITIONS

FOR

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT:

STUDENTS' VIEWS

by

John Beresford, M. Phil.

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, October 2001

Dedicated to my mother, still with us, who has urged me to complete this before she reaches 90, and to my father, sadly departed, who would have urged me to complete it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank a number of people associated with this PhD thesis, without whose help it would never have been completed. I have already referred to my mother, whose dismay at my wish to postpone the date of submission was a major influence in my submitting on time. In this respect I would also like to thank my partner and colleague in the IQEA (*Improving The Quality of Education for All*) Project, Hilary Stokes, for her good-humoured nagging extending over a number of years. I also thank her for reading through this work, making helpful suggestions about the text, and still staying with me after the experience.

As the Research Officer attached to the IQEA Project in Cambridge and Nottingham, it has been my good fortune to have worked with, and been inspired by, a range of colleagues over the years. A number of them now have Chairs. I would particularly like to thank Professor Mel West for his ongoing criticism of my work, much of which was constructive, and for his wit and wisdom; Professor David Hopkins, for his inspiration and support, as well as for being a source of employment; Professor Geoff Southworth, for his interest and friendship, and Dr. Alma Harris, for nagging me when my partner wasn't around. This work would not have been possible without the hospitality of countless IQEA schools, and the tolerance of their school communities. In acknowledging the active role that I believe the recipients of education should have, I have referred to them throughout this work as 'students' rather than the more passive 'pupils'. I also thank them sincerely.

Where parts of the texts of chapters have already been published, I have indicated where they have been published at the end of the relevant chapter.

John Beresford.

University of Nottingham. August 2001

ABSTRACT

The latter part of the twentieth century experienced an increased emphasis in industrialised societies on educational performance, and ongoing efforts are still in progress to enhance levels of performance, particularly to prepare young people for the ever-changing work demands occasioned by the revolution in communications and in the provision of information. Educationalists have been interested in the replicability of successful school systems, and this has resulted in a focus upon decision-making at the various levels of educational governance.

At school level the concepts of enabling conditions and development capacity are now well grounded in the theory of school effectiveness and school improvement. Within the IQEA *(Improving The Quality of Education for All)* Project, schools are encouraged to develop their management and classroom conditions at the same time as they work upon their improvement initiatives. There exist a number of instruments devised within the project to measure the capacity of schools both at management and classroom level to sustain a culture of school improvement.

Along with this interest in school-based improvement initiatives, there has been an increasing interest in the part various stake-holders within the school community can play in school improvement. One such group are students, and teachers, particularly within IQEA, have increasingly wished to consult them when undertaking or evaluating policy changes within their schools. To this

end teachers have also been interested in comparing their own views with those of their students on the culture of the school and its classrooms.

This thesis represents an attempt to provide teachers with just such an instrument of comparison. It first contextualises the notion of Student Conditions within the literature of School Improvement Conditions. In devising, conceptualising and researching a set of Student Conditions which are related to the IQEA Classroom Conditions this work sets out not only to give teachers and senior management a means of triangulating their own views with those of the students in their school, it also provides data for teachers to gauge the capacity of the student body to sustain school improvement. Preliminary results from the piloting of the Student Conditions Survey are presented. The final chapter discusses the implications for teaching and learning, for school improvement initiatives and for the culture of classrooms and schools if these student conditions are to be developed.

The Student Conditions are, in the order they appear in the thesis:

Self-assessment The ability of students to reflect upon and to improve the quality of their own work.

Independent Learning The ability of students to access the skills and resources necessary to achieve learning autonomy.

Affinity to teachers The ability of students to maintain a relationship with teachers that enables them to seek and receive help and support when they require it.

Learning repertoire The ability of students to exploit fully the range of teaching and learning strategies encountered in and out of the classroom.

Orientation to Learning The ability of students to be self-motivated, and to enjoy learning.

Adjustment to School The ability of students to learn within a structured environment of rules and behaviour parameters.

Along with the two other Conditions Surveys, the Student Conditions Survey is intended to contribute to a battery of research instruments, which will provide useful data and an agenda for a whole-school discussion on how schools can improve. The thesis also presents data from the piloting of the research instrument in over 40 IQEA Schools, and briefly outlines how some of these schools have used the findings in their improvement initiatives.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Never before have we possessed, at the same time, a national quest for change; a government committed to state education, ready to invest significantly extra money year on year; and a programme of educational reform with huge support, not just in schools, but from parents, employers, the wider public and the media.

(Prime Minister Blair addressing the Annual Conference of the National Association of Head Teachers, 1999)

We employ the concept of conditions in a variety of settings. Meteorologists describe climatic conditions which they forecast will produce particular types of weather. Cricket commentators describe atmospheric and pitch conditions to forecast how a cricket pitch will 'play'. Health and safety inspectors are experts on the workplace conditions deemed necessary for safe working. Economists describe the conditions necessary for the economic 'take-off' of developing countries into large-scale industrial production. And school improvers write about the conditions necessary for school improvement to take place. While the weather is still beyond the control of man, the other conditions described are open to adjustment, or change. Part of the agenda of school effectiveness research in the latter part of the last century was to demonstrate that changes in certain conditions could lead to school improvement (see for example, Rutter et al. 1979).

The shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines a condition as "something that must exist or be present if something else is to be or take place". For school improvement initiatives, this implies

> *a systemic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions, and other related internal conditions, in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.*
>
> (Van Velzen et al. 1985: 48)

This definition has been subsequently refined. For example, various writers have suggested minimum timespans for school improvement to make a difference at national (see, for example, Dalin 1994, Labour Party 1997) and at school level (see, for example, Joyce et al. 1999). As part of a reconciliation of the twin research traditions of school improvement and school effectiveness, there has been a recent attempt to redefine the 'ultimate aim' of school improvement:

> *An improving school ... may be defined as one which 'increases in its effectiveness' over time, where 'effectiveness' is judged in value-added terms ... one which secures year-on-year improvements in the outcomes of successive cohorts of 'similar' pupils.*
>
> (Gray et al. 1999: 5, 41)

"Educational goals' have invariably referred in the effectiveness and improvement literature to academic outcomes, although the concentration of improvement efforts and the focus of effectiveness research on such a narrow definition has been criticised (Fielding 1997).

School improvement is thus clearly defined as a process rather than as an event. When we talk of the conditions for school improvement, we are

referring to a set of prerequisites which enable an incremental growth in school effectiveness to take place. Returning to Van Velzen's definition of school improvement, we are seeking to define a set of conditions which need to be developed and maintained to make those schools more effective. For school improvers, the development and maintenance of these conditions, and of a school's capacity to improve, are critical elements in school improvement.

Accounts of such conditions have focused on the national, district, school and classroom levels. These accounts identify three main categories of condition:

1. *Climatic* conditions describe a set of circumstances, often external to educational systems, in which a 'systemic, sustained effort' is likely to take place. These may consist of global developments, like the revolution in information technology, to which educational systems are expected to respond. They suggest a sense or feeling, often of malaise, that change for the better is needed, and that the time is auspicious for such a change. The 'national quest for change' identified in the opening quote to this Introduction is just such an example of such a feeling. Climatic conditions are important because they often act as triggers for cultural and systemic changes, particularly (as is the case in England) where there is a national educational system with an infrastructure to implement change down to the level of the school, and regulatory structures which can strongly influence teaching in individual classrooms.

2. *Systemic* conditions describe the logistical arrangements necessary for school improvement to take place. These arrangements are formal, and are maintained by managerial control through established procedures and lines of communication. Systemic conditions are visible, tangible, institutionalised and bureaucratic. Because of this, they can be changed more easily and more quickly than cultural conditions. Changes in systemic arrangements can (slowly) impact upon cultural conditions.

3. *Cultural* conditions describe the informal arrangements necessary for school improvement to take place. They are not dependent for their maintenance solely upon managerial relations. Relations are cross-hierarchical, "bound by the rhythms of development" (Jackson 2000). Cultural conditions are invisible, intangible and fluid. They are less open to manipulation and management than systemic conditions. Their existence can expedite or block systemic change. For this reason, school improvers have shown great interest in the cultural conditions at the school and classroom levels.

A brief background to the thesis

This work is a contribution to the understanding of the conditions necessary at school and classroom level for school improvement to take place. As Research Officer attached to the IQEA *(Improving The Quality of Education For All)* School Improvement Project, now based at The Centre for Teacher Development at the University of Nottingham, much of my work is concerned with mapping such conditions in our various IQEA schools.

The IQEA Project arose from the need for schools to cope with the pressures of enforced change following the legislation of the late 1980s and early 1990s, and from the efforts of some Cambridge-based academics to help them cope with these changes. That help was based on the premise that schools needed to develop their capacity to manage change, while pursuing their own reform agendas to provide quality education for their students. Early work with a small number of Primary and Secondary schools gave rise to a recognition that this capacity-building would involve most schools in a process of change in how they conducted their internal processes and in how they conducted their professional relationships. In short, the change would in part need to be cultural.

Part of the project was to help schools understand the processes of change, and it was recognised early on that

> *there is room for new, more user-friendly yet penetrating techniques for investigating and measuring the complex processes and relationships involved in mapping the process of change in schools.*
>
> (Ainscow et al. 1994a)

Amongst the instruments developed was one which tested staff's perceptions about the current capacity of their school to accommodate change, the Management Conditions survey (Ainscow et al. 1994a, Ainscow et al. 2000).

From subsequent research within the project, it became clear that successful schools not only paid attention to internal management processes but also to what was happening in their classrooms. A set of classroom conditions was

conceptualised (Hopkins et al. 1995, Hopkins et al. 1998). This conceptualisation arose from a combination of empirical research findings from within the IQEA project and a review of the literature of effective teaching and learning (Beresford 1995a). From this conceptualisation a Classroom Conditions Survey was derived (Hopkins et al.1997a).

The IQEA Management and Classroom Conditions Surveys were devised to give schools a broad-brush view of their preparedness for school improvement. Each survey lists 24 behaviours characteristic of improving schools, and asks various members of the school community to comment on how often these behaviours occur. The Management Conditions Survey assesses a school's capacity to improve, the Classroom Conditions Survey maps the classroom culture in the school.

Schools have found the data produced from each survey to be very useful, and they have often formed the basis of a school-wide discussion on the issues highlighted. This has in many instances led to further school-based research and subsequent reform programmes aimed to impact upon some aspect of school life. With the Management Survey data, schools have focused on differences between the perceptions of senior management, of teachers and of support staff. With the Classroom Survey data, schools have discussed differences between the perceptions of management and teachers.

Much of the research work which related to classroom practice explored students' perceptions of that practice. This focus reflected a growing interest in the mid-1990s in the student voice, and a belief that

> *pupils' accounts of experience should be heard and should be taken seriously in debates about learning.*
>
> (Rudduck et al. 1996a)

Not only was this voice "astute and articulate" (Smees and Thomas 1998), it could also cast a unique and distinctive light upon the school environment.

This interest arose partly from a growing concern within western society for minors' rights, and partly as the result of a focus on consumers' rights which in education represented those of students as well as their parents (see, for example, Rudduck et al. 1996b, Beresford 1999a). Also important was the need increasingly acknowledged in industrial societies to commit their school populations to accepting learning as an essential part of their future working lives (Skilbeck 1994). Implicit in this interest was the view that learning took place more effectively where the needs of the learner were addressed. Part of the process of addressing these needs was canvassing the views of learners.

In our IQEA Project schools teachers became increasingly interested in such a process. With the marginalisation of teacher control over curriculum content, after the legislation of the late 1980s, the method of curriculum delivery became the main arena of teacher-student dialogue. Now that schools were also interested in maximising student numbers in order to attract funding,

students' views on and commitment to how their school was run became critical.

There was, however, no 'user-friendly' equivalent of these surveys to find out the views of students about the culture of the classrooms in which they learnt. Teachers within the project were able to compare their own perceptions with those of their colleagues, but were as yet unable to test them with those of their students. Some teachers were interested in finding out such views *per se*.

The Management Conditions Survey lists behaviours which are largely invisible to students. They deal with whether teachers reflect upon their teaching practices (1.1-1.4), the extent of planning in the school (2.1-2.4), the role of staff development (4.1-4.4), how development work in the school is co-ordinated (5.1-5.4) and the function of leadership in school development (6.1-6.4). The one area where students would be aware of teacher behaviours was the part of the survey dealing with how the school involves other members of the school community in the running of the school (3.1-3.4). Behaviour 3.1 states that

> *In this school we ask students for their views before we make major changes*
>
> (Ainscow et al. 2000: 141).

As a basis for devising a Conditions Survey to canvass the views of students, the Management Conditions Survey therefore provided little potential. The Classroom Conditions (see Figure 2) provided greater promise, because they

dealt with behaviours which were more visible to students, including some which involved the students themselves.

For such a student survey to be of use to teachers it needed to provide student perceptions on similar conditions to those highlighted in the Classroom Conditions instrument. The set of 24 behaviours in each instrument relating to classroom culture needed to relate fairly closely. The difficulty remained that the subject matter of some of the behaviours were more apparent to teachers than they were to students. For example, much of the planning of lessons would still be invisible to the student body. Students in a particular school would not necessarily know whether *teachers discuss with each other the nature of teaching strategies and their application to classroom practice and schemes of work* (Behaviour 5.1), or whether *teachers establish specifications or guidelines for new teaching strategies* (Behaviour 5.2). It became clear that a discrete set of Student Conditions would need to be devised which would, however, mirror as closely as possible the conditions identified earlier in the project as contributing to effective classroom practice.

AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS				
1.1	**Teachers demonstrate positive regard for all pupils.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.2	**Teachers conduct their relationships in the classroom in ways that demonstrate consistency and fairness and build trust.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.3	**Teachers understand and show that communication with pupils involves listening as much as speaking.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.4	**Teachers make their classrooms places where pupils can safely experiment with behaviours involving choice, risk-taking and personal responsibility.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS				
2.1	**Teachers establish clear boundaries to, and expectations of, pupil behaviour.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.2	**Teachers promote a system of rewards and sanctions that emphasises expectations and promotes pupil self-esteem and self-discipline.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.3	**Teachers use active management strategies to create and maintain an appropriate classroom environment.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.4	**Teachers show consistency, without inflexibility, in responding to pupils and events.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
PLANNING FOR TEACHING				
3.1	**Teachers build variety into lesson plans.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.2	**Teachers adjust classroom arrangements in response to pupil feedback during lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.3	**Teachers employ strategies that enable pupils to find meaning in lesson activities.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.4	**Teachers use homework to reinforce and extend learning.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

FIGURE 1: CLASSROOM CONDITIONS SCALE

TEACHING REPERTOIRE				
4.1	**Teachers demonstrate a range of classroom management skills in their lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.2	**Teachers employ various teaching strategies or models within their lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.3	**Teachers trial and refine new teaching models as part of their own professional development.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.4	**Teachers reflect on their classroom practice.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
PEDAGOGIC PARTNERSHIPS				
5.1	**Teachers discuss with each other the nature of teaching strategies and their application to classroom practice and schemes of work.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.2	**Teachers establish specifications or guidelines for new teaching strategies.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.3	**Teachers agree on standards used to assess student progress as a result of employing a range of teaching methods.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.4	**Teachers engage in mutual observation and partnership teaching during lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
REFLECTION ON TEACHING				
6.1	**Teachers use systematically-collected classroom-based data in their decision-making.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.2	**Teachers employ effective strategies for reviewing progress and the impact of classroom innovation on pupil progress.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.3	**Teachers are widely involved in the process of data collection.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.4	**Teachers establish clear ground rules for the collection, control and use of school-based data.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

FIGURE 1: CLASSROOM CONDITIONS SCALE
(reproduced from Hopkins et al. 1997a)

Deriving the set of Student Conditions.

The genesis and exegesis of the Management Conditions have been described elsewhere (Hopkins et al. 1994). In *School Improvement in an Era of Change*, David Hopkins and his colleagues relate how they acted upon Miles' contention that

> *a focus on [schools'] common properties can help one see how such properties constrain and limit change efforts, as well as how they provide active driving and restraining forces.*
>
> (Miles 1981:43, quoted in Hopkins et al. 1994:106)

They continue:

> *Our own collaboration with schools, particularly during the IQEA project, ... led to a synthesizing of our understanding of the literature of school improvement with our experience of the practice of school improvement. We began by trying to establish what was common to the findings of school effectiveness studies. We also looked for evidence that schools could make sense of these findings, which were often expressed as principles rather than activities, and use them to generate school-level improvements.*
>
> (Ibid.)

The resulting instrument was thus based upon a review of school effectiveness literature, and the authors' own empirical research which they conducted at the

same time as helping schools in their improvement efforts. Inasmuch as Hopkins and colleagues were thus in part researching their own practice, the instrument is a product of the action research paradigm. The creation of the Classroom Conditions Scale had a similar history, which is related in detail elsewhere (Hopkins et al. 1997).

Wishing to model the Classroom Conditions Scale on the previous Management Scale, perhaps to satisfy a " compulsive striving for conceptual tidiness and clarity" (Hopkins et al. 1996: 48), and to provide some coherence to schools' mapping experiences, the authors then attempted to "backward map" the Classroom Conditions onto the Management Conditions. The result is seen in Figure 2.

School Level Condition	Enabling Condition	Classroom Level Condition
Teacher's workplace	Staff development	Teacher's repertoire
School and its community	Involvement	Authentic relationships
Transformational leadership	Leadership	Pedagogic partnerships
Working across the levels	Co-ordination	Rules and boundaries
Utilising school level data	Enquiry and reflection	Reflection on teaching
Planning for development and maintenance	Collaborative planning	Planning, resources and preparation

Figure 2: The enabling conditions for school improvement
(reproduced from Hopkins et al. 1996: 48)

The central Enabling Condition impacts upon both School Level and Classroom Level Conditions. A priority given in a school to staff development can, for example, help improve the range of teaching strategies employed by

the school's classroom teachers, as well as facilitate a debate at departmental and whole staff levels on the efficacy of the various strategies employed. A stress on involvement can impact upon the quality of teacher-student relationships in the classroom as well as upon relationships with members of the wider school community. Schools whose leaders allow initiatives to be taken by individuals or groups regardless of their position in the management hierarchy can achieve spectacular learning improvements at both classroom and school level. The development of co-ordination establishes procedures to facilitate effective learning at classroom level as well as the effective dissemination and review of good teaching and learning practices across the school. Building a culture of enquiry and reflection utilises data which can be collected in the classroom and at school level. Finally, where planning is a process of the involvement of and negotiation with interested parties, planning at both school and classroom level is more likely to be effective, and to achieve the intended ends.

The purpose of a Student Conditions Survey would be to inform the planning of teachers in schools by providing them with the views of students on what is going on in the school and its classrooms. That is why the title of this work refers to students' views of the Classroom Conditions: the survey is designed as a heuristic for teachers rather than for students. Within IQEA, our hope is that teachers will at least take account of the student views expressed in the Survey in their planning of classroom learning experiences. At best, the results of the survey can be used as the basis for a discussion with students on how the

school is run and how their learning is organised, where schools are inclined to use them in that way.

It was with a view to finding an instrument to map students' views on the culture of their classrooms and school that I embarked upon this study. I have been fortunate that my daily work has both informed and refined my studies as a PhD student. My work in somewhere near 100 schools over the past four years has given me a privileged viewpoint from which to scan and assess students' views on what happens in their schools. I repeat my thanks to my IQEA colleagues and the various members of the IQEA schools' communities who have made this possible.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 explores the literature of conditions for school improvement, and reconceptualises the classroom conditions into a form more recognisable to students. It provides the philosophical backcloth to the rest of the study. Chapter 2 describes the methodology used for elaborating and refining the derived conditions. Chapters 3 to 8 conceptualise each of the conditions, using a combination and intermeshing of the literature and of case study materials from IQEA schools. Chapter 9 presents the instrument, and reports on the findings in its pilot administration in about 40 schools. Chapter 10 discusses the implications of these findings and of the reconceptualised conditions on teaching and learning, student involvement in school improvement initiatives and the culture of the classroom and the school.

Some material in this Introduction will be published in Beresford 2002.

CHAPTER 1

The Conditions for School Improvement:

A Review of the Literature

> *The successful implementation of radical reform has never been a matter merely of investment, important though that is. It is also crucially a matter of ensuring that at every level in the system there are people with skills, knowledge, understanding, time and attitudes which enable successful change to occur. In short, it is a matter of building capacity.*
>
> (DFEE 2001a: 84)

The Labour Government's own review of its achievements in education between 1997 and 2001, and its plans for an anticipated return to power in 2001, highlight changes and proposals, as mentioned above, "at every level of the system". These levels are those recognised in the literature of school improvement as national, district, school and, latterly, the classroom. The discussion of each level utilises the categories of climatic, systemic and cultural conditions and changes outlined in the Introduction.

This chapter sets out to provide the contexts at national, district, school and classroom levels which make it propitious for school improvement to take place. Many of the systemic conditions draw from the growing literature on the management of change. The impact of the national context on the district, the school and the classroom is discussed. From this discussion a set of 'domains' are derived, enabling a student perspective on the classroom conditions necessary for school improvement.

National Conditions for School Improvement

At national level, the *climatic* condition necessary to trigger school improvement efforts has often been a perceived deficiency in the academic performance of a country's school population. In the USA the trauma created by the USSR's launch of Sputnik in 1957 in advance of its own space programme created a huge national press for improved science teaching in schools. In England, the need to improve educational provision first articulated in the 1970s (see, for example, Callaghan 1976, Cox and Boyson 1975, Cox and Boyson 1977) was the direct result of a sense of losing ground to industrial competitors abroad:

> *With the increasing complexity of modern life we cannot be satisfied with maintaining existing standards, let alone observe any decline. We must aim for something better.*
>
> (Callaghan 1976)

This early sense of losing ground, fuelled by unfavourable comparisons of schooling in the West and the Far East (see, for example, Stevenson and Stigler 1992, Reynolds and Farrell 1996), persisted:

> *Where we have improved, others have improved further and faster.*
>
> (Labour Party 1995b)

In England, these concerns have produced the heavily directed government literacy and numeracy programmes in the Primary schooling sector (DFEE 1998a, DFEE 1999), shortly to be extended to the Secondary sector.

Such feelings of malaise may be experienced over shortcomings in parts of the system as well as about the system as a whole. Lack of confidence in state-provided urban education in England has remained a major concern since the 1990s (see Barber et al. 1994). A future government adviser, writing before the general election of 1997, suggested that

> *the policy challenge for Labour must ... be to create learning conditions in the large conurbations which give parents much greater confidence in secondary education than they have at present.*
>
> (Barber 1996a)

Again, a sense of deficiency within the system has led to government-sponsored systemic change, this time with the establishment of a number of Education Action Zones in urban areas of greatest perceived need (DFEE 1997a).

This feeling of malaise with national educational performance, I have argued, is a precursor of a programme for school improvement. It does not arise spontaneously, and a number of writers have speculated about its causes.

Recent national initiatives to make school systems more responsive to change have been occasioned by global developments: the expansion of international trade, the revolution in micro-electronics and communications, the pace of technological change. These global developments have been likened by some writers to a juggernaut (Giddens 1990, Barber 1996b).

> *a runaway engine of enormous power which, collectively as human beings, we can drive to some extent, but which also threatens to rush out of our control and which could render itself asunder.*
>
> (Giddens ibid.: 139)

Mankind's main challenge is seen as coming to terms with and harnessing what is described as the global consequences of modernity, including protecting the environment and staving off war. In such critical times, education for all becomes a necessity:

> *No-one can completely opt out of the abstract systems involved in modern institutions.*
>
> (Ibid.: 84)

Universal education is needed so that everyone can play their part in controlling the juggernaut, providing "a guarantee of capacity to participate" (Skilbeck 1994). Increasingly, governments in industrialised societies have viewed the development of this capacity in terms of providing "a common experience for all students of whatever backgrounds or perceived abilities" (McLean 1990). For example the most recent revision of the Japanese Course of Study, their national curriculum, has tried

> *to place more emphasis on basic and essential knowledge and skills required of every citizen of our country*
>
> (Yamagiwa 1994).

In England the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 was in part to provide what was felt to be a better preparation for life at work and in society than the more Humanities-based curriculum generally felt to be taught in the 1970s and 1980s:

> *The National Curriculum ... tries to ensure that all students up to the age of 16 continue to study mathematics, sciences and technology which would otherwise be neglected in the preparation of aesthetes.*
>
> (McLean 1990)

This development of the individual's 'capacity to participate' in a "global economy of technological change" (Labour Party 1997) has in part been in response to fundamental changes in workplace requirements brought about by the same technological change. Three main changes have been identified:

1. ***The need for flexibility.*** The need for business to be responsive to sudden changes in the global market, and for workers to be responsive to frequent changes in industrial technology, had spawned what has been called 'Post Fordism',

> *the appearance of a collection of industrial innovations, such as flexible specialised production, new uses of information-based technologies, flatter management structures, and the new emphasis upon teamwork*
>
> (Young 1993).

'Post-Fordism' provides a contrast to a fast-disappearing world where workers could rely upon single skills or unskilled work to provide them with a life-

long income. For example, in the motor industry simple skill applications have been replaced by

> *a horizontal integration of skills, involving tasks at similar levels of competence.*
>
> (Phillimore 1989)

As unskilled jobs disappear,

> *the requirement is for a work-force which is more flexible, more skilled and capable of continued learning.*
>
> (Hughes 1994)

This flexibility involves "a preparedness to meet different requirements at different career stages" (Smith 1994).

2. ***An increased emphasis on teamwork.*** Because of the proliferation of knowledge and the pace of technological change, Giddens argues that

> *no-one can become an expert, in the sense of the possession either of full expert knowledge or of the appropriate formal credentials, in more that a few small sectors of the immensely complicated knowledge systems which now exist.*
>
> (Giddens 1990: 144)

This effectively means that even the most simple task may involve some degree of co-operation with others. In reviewing a curriculum for 2000, Ted Wragg suggests that

as more jobs are created in service, leisure and recreation, the ability to get on with others becomes more valued.

(Wragg 1997)

BP, in its submission to the government prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum, called for a core of numeracy and literary skills, but also

that range of personal transferable skills (e.g. communication, problem-solving, and team-work skills) which is so essential to effective participation in business life.

(Haviland 1988)

3. ***A commitment to life-long learning.*** Because of the generation and increased availability of new knowledge related to the workplace, there is a need to encourage

well-rounded, technologically literate citizens who have some insight into the processes of scientific and technological development and the capacity and will to keep returning to the system to sharpen and broaden their skills and understanding.

(Young 1993)

Recognising this need, the Japanese Course of Study lays down that "children's willingness to learn how to learn is also to be stimulated" (Yamagiwa 1994). In short, the information society "requires the capacity not simply to learn new skills, but to keep on doing so" (Hughes 1994).

The growth in calls for the public accountability of the education service has also been cited as an important part of the climate which has produced the school improvement initiative. The high inflation economy in England in the 1970s, following the crisis in oil supplies from the Middle East, occasioned a fundamental review of policy and management structures in British industry and public utilities. One of the most fundamental changes was the shift from a planning process which merely added an inflation element to the previous year's budget to one where costings were made prior to, rather than after, transactions. Managerial control passed to the level where costs were incurred, to the local plant level (Beresford 1995b).

As early as 1977 a major review of how schools were managed was advocating the pattern of budget scrutiny and control being adopted in industry (Sizer 1989, Beresford 1993):

> *We consider that a more effective use of resources would be secured by locating decisions with the users in the schools and that this in turn would foster a sense of responsibility in heads and senior staff and help ensure that all the various interests involved in the running of the school were engaged in a constant examination of the school's needs and ways of meeting them effectively and economically.*
>
> (Taylor 1977:67)

This extract from the Taylor Report foreshadowed the increasing accountability of schools and governing bodies in the 1980s and 1990s for the delivery of the education service, the establishment of the Local Management

of Schools in the legislation of 1988, and the subsequent growth of school development planning (Hargreaves et al. 1989). Taken hand-in-hand with the Great Debate on educational priorities, occasioned by Prime Minister Callaghan's Ruskin College Speech of 1976, it presaged a period of questioning, uncertainty and change through which the English educational system is still passing. This period of turmoil spanning over two decades supports the recently-stated view that

> *while stability seems to be an enduring feature of school systems, some instability must also be present for school improvement to take place.*
>
> (Gray et al. 1999:47)

This growth in school-based accountability, itself a product of high inflation, limited public utility budgets and priority planning, has not been restricted to England. Scandinavia is, for the first time in its history, experiencing cuts in its national educational budget. Governments there are looking to English models of inspection in order to ensure that considerations of social justice and equity are addressed in their schools, and that all students receive a similar educational entitlement (Beresford 1999a):

> *When evaluation is introduced from above ... it is often also used to satisfy policy-makers' need to know and to influence.*
>
> (Lander and Ekholm 1996)

Andy Hargreaves makes similar observations about the changes brought about by economic change. The certainties of rational, linear economic planning and progress are being replaced by irregular budgets, chaos and chance;

permanent employment in large units of production and utility is being replaced by temporary employment in small units; the public provision of services is being replaced by privatisation, the exercise of market forces and self-help (Hargreaves 1995). In an international overview of school development, similar turbulent changes affecting education are highlighted: decentralisation of policy-making and of administration, increasing privatisation of schools, increased parental choice and a growth in outcomes-based financing (Dalin 1998).

Other observers cite social trends and developments which impinge upon education systems. In Canada and England changes in family life and in attitudes to authority are creating turbulence within the education systems in those countries (Hopkins and Levin 2000). The imperative of finding ways of doing things more quickly and cost-effectively has fuelled a revolution in communications, which in itself has contributed to a general sense of insecurity in education and elsewhere:

> *The reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character ...We are abroad in a world which is thoroughly constituted through reflexively applied knowledge, but where at the same time we can never be sure that any given element of that knowledge will not be revised.*
>
> (Giddens 1990: 38, 39)

This view translates readily to education in England. Since the early 1990s, schools have been involved in a planning cycle where they review and reorganise their own policies and practices on a regular basis. There has been a plethora of research and government initiatives on each of these - planning, policies and practices - much of which give often contradictory advice. Changing curriculum requirements and the ever-present and all-pervading drive to do things more effectively, in a climate of increased accountability for the deployment of public funds, create a climate of uncertainty which appears to be a necessary condition for school improvement.

The *systemic* conditions necessary at national level for school improvement to take place have been investigated largely within the literature of educational change. Fullan's seminal work (Fullan 1982) suggests that

- quality innovations need to be developed in response to the demand for change;
- these innovations need national advocacy;
- there needs to be a national, funded network which can disseminate and help implement the innovations;
- barriers to implementation need to be removed by legislation.

Dalin, reviewing school improvement efforts in Colombia, Ethiopia and Bangladesh (Dalin 1994), largely concurs, citing

- a systematic national government and support structure which sustains the innovation(s) for at least ten years;
- a local capacity to implement change and improvement in school and classroom practices;
- a coherent linkage system between the centre, the district and the school.

Applying Fullan's and Dalin's ideas to the implementation of the Literacy Strategy in England, the innovation was based upon best practice in the teaching of English at the Primary level. Each teacher in the Primary sector received a manual prescribing teaching activities for different age levels of students, and was also trained in implementing the Strategy by locally-based trainers using funds provided by the government. The Strategy was energetically promoted by Government ministers and endorsed by the general public. Teachers generally welcomed the initiative, although there were reservations expressed about the prescriptive nature of much of the delivery. Most Local Authorities appointed Literacy Advisers who, through a network of teachers in schools with special responsibility for Literacy, were able to help in the implementation of the Strategy. Necessary changes in the balance of the curriculum required of Primary schools were introduced by legislation.

Other changes recently introduced in England as responses to perceived systemic shortcomings include the vocational awards for Secondary students (NVQs, GNVQs); Key Skills Initiative, which seeks to provide older Secondary students with the transferable skills deemed necessary for their subsequent working lives (QCA 2000) and the Key Stage 3 Strategy, which is

designed to improve the performance and commitments of secondary students aged 11 to 14 (DFEE 2001b).

District Conditions for School Improvement

The sense of educational malaise and the desire to do better has been felt as keenly at district as at national level. In England there has been, since public examination results have started to be published, an ongoing concern about the general performance of city schools, and of the educational provision in some metropolitan local authorities (LEAs). OFSTED's study of 134 institutions in eight local authorities (OFSTED 1993d) highlighted weaknesses of provision exacerbated by poor links between institutions, patchy access to pre-school education, underachievement at the Primary level, poor communication skills at Primary and Secondary levels, poor teaching and poor management of teaching, and little evidence of addressing the needs of the disadvantaged during and after compulsory education. Complaints of underachievement in urban schools have been made in Leeds, where the Primary curriculum in 1991 was found to be still dominated by reading and writing, and characterised by low expectations of pupils (Alexander 1991); in Birmingham, where lack of a nursery education was identified as the most important of seven factors inhibiting pupil performance when starting school (Birmingham City Council Education Department 1995a, Boseley 1995) and Bradford, where under-achievement amongst white male students has been a major concern (Grant 1996). Raising the performance of students in city schools is a central feature of the present government's educational agenda

(Labour Party 1997, DFEE 1997a).

This concern about poor achievement in inner-city areas is echoed in other industrialised countries with large conurbations, most markedly in the USA. Here the same pressures for cost-effectiveness in public education which produced LMS in England have produced huge high schools, and a large volume of sometimes contradictory research about the relationship between school size and students' academic performance (see, for example, Howley 1989). Attendance rates have been identified as by far the most important indicators of inner-city school achievement, and much energy and resourcing has been expended on improving these (Caldas 1993, Consortium on Chicago School Research 1996).

In England, as in America, the generally poor performance of urban schooling has raised concerns about social justice and equity. Improving the performance of underachieving schools has become a social priority as well as part of a drive to improve national educational performance. At district level LEAs have been required to respond to the government's agenda for school improvement whilst coming to terms with "losing an empire" (Audit Commission 1989), as a result of the devolution of funding to schools under LMS. From being initiators and controllers of the curriculum and educational policies in their local schools, LEAs since 1988 have become filters of government policy and enablers of school development. The increased devolution of funding to school in the 1990s has meant that the government and the LEAs have come under intense scrutiny for how the funds not

devolved are being used. The OFSTED inspection of LEAs, with a particular focus upon how they help the schools in their district to improve, is the natural concomitant of such a concern (OFSTED/Audit Commission 1997). Similar readjustments in role have taken place elsewhere, for example in New South Wales where professional development funding has been devolved directly to schools for the first time (McCulla 1995).

In addition, a series of government directives have clearly established an improvement focus for what schools do, and how LEAs are expected to support them. Schools are now inspected on how much they have improved between inspections, and to what extent they have developed a capacity for ongoing improvement (OFSTED 1998, OFSTED 1999a, OFSTED 1999b, OFSTED 1999c). LEAs are similarly inspected on how their management structure helps their schools to improve (OFSTED/Audit Commission 1997), and since April 1999 they have been required to draw up Education Development Plans (EDPs) to facilitate school improvement (DFEE 1997). The educational system in England has almost reached the stage where

> *the roles of teachers, heads, governors, parents, support staff ... and local authorities* [are] *defined, harnessed and committed to the process of school improvement.*
>
> (Hopkins and Lagerweij 1996)

The pressures to adapt to new challenges, and to meet them cost-effectively, contribute to a turbulence at district level which finds echoes in that described above at national level as a necessary condition for school improvement.

Systemic changes at district level have drawn from the experiences of LEAs collaborating on school improvement with Higher Education institutions. Barber numbered sixty such projects operating largely in cities in the early 1990s (Barber et al. 1994). In Essex in the mid-90s personnel from the Cambridge-based IQEA (*Improving The Quality of Education for All*) Project worked with a range of LEA officers on a project to improve the performance of some of their Primary Schools (the EPSI Project) (Southworth and Sebba 1997). Similar collaborations took place in Lewisham (Myers 1995a) and in Enfield (Beresford and Boyd 1996). Within IQEA the projects in Essex and Enfield have served as a model for further work in the LEAs of Nottingham, Derby, Walsall, Leicester, Merthyr and Swansea.

The literature of school improvement identifies five elements of district systems as essential conditions for facilitating school improvement.

1. Internal drive for external improvement agendas. In England the scope for local educational initiatives has been greatly reduced through the government's earmarking of funds held at district level. Local initiatives are increasingly subsumed within the government's national agenda for school improvement. In such circumstances, districts serve their schools best when they not only accommodate externally-driven policies, but also actively subscribe to them and drive them forwards themselves. In England this translates as becoming a "critical friend" of their schools (Mortimore 1995), as "challenging complacency" (Corbett et al. 1996) and, elsewhere, as

"turning up the heat" (Donahoe 1993). In Ontario, a local district administration "nudged, supported, questioned and celebrated" a district-wide school restructuring process (Hannay and Ross 1999).

Target-setting has become a recognised strategy to drive school improvement. In England, national targets for levels of literacy and numeracy have been set for 2002, and these in turn have been translated into targets for individual LEAs to achieve. In their turn, LEAs have set challenging targets for their individual schools (DFEE/OFSTED 1996, DFEE 1997b, Lawley 1999). In Chicago, the district set educational goals for their individual schools after the establishment of site-based management in 1988 (Consortium on Chicago School Research 1995). Local support, particularly from parents, remains a key element where districts retain considerable control over what happens in their schools (Donahoe 1993, Dalin 1994).

2. The provision of data, and advice on its collection. Many districts have overtly subscribed to "a commitment and preoccupation with inquiry, assessment of progress, and continuous improvement" (Fullan 1994) by setting up their own research departments. Many LEAs have appointed a School Improvement Officer, with a specific responsibility to initiate and co-ordinate school improvement activities within the district. In England schools are in receipt from OFSTED of published examination data and comparisons of their performance in academic and some affective activities with similar schools. Data relating to the 'value added' by schools are available locally

(see, for example, Birmingham City Council Education Department 1995b. Thomas and Mortimore 1994), and published details of post-16 exam results now contain a value-added rating. Teachers receive training in assessment techniques where they are required for testing students at the end of key stages. Many LEAs encourage and train teachers to undertake action research: this has been a feature of projects involving IQEA (Southworth and Sebba 1997, Beresford and Payne 1997). Such local initiatives have now received national funding support, though only on a limited scale (DFEE 2001c).

3. Provision of consultancy on action. Where districts have actively encouraged schools to undertake their own research, they have generally provided advice on follow-up action. Because of the scope of the Essex EPSI project, LEA officers from both within and outside the Advisory Service undertook training in developing their consultancy skills (Lincoln and Southworth 1996). In IQEA Projects there is a strong emphasis on equipping LEA staff with such skills, because the number of projects now in existence means that the related Higher Education institutions, like Nottingham University, cannot possibly provide enough personnel to provide consultancy themselves. Since the regular inspection cycle was established in 1992, LEAs have been providing advice to their schools on drawing up and following the mandatory Action Plans required by OFSTED. Where LEAs have had a number of failing schools, this has often stretched their consultancy resources (Leask and Pachler 1995, Lockhart 1996, Kingston 1997, Tomlinson 1997).

4. Help in implementation. The volume of government-initiated reforms has

been dependent for its implementation upon locally-available training for teachers. Ear-marked funds have been made available at district level to train all Primary teachers in the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. LEAs have generally been good at providing this kind of in-service training (OFSTED 1993b), although recent assessments suggest that provision may be more variable (Leask and Pachler 1995, OFSTED 2000).

5. Building empowerment. Recognising the 'start-up' nature of many of the above functions and elements, many LEAs have built their own redundancy into school improvement projects in their districts. For example, schools remain in LEA-sponsored IQEA projects for two years, and thereafter are encouraged to network informally, where they

> *are more likely to have the confidence to innovate and to avoid the demoralising downward spiral that can result from facing overwhelming pressures in isolation.*
>
> (Barber 1995)

There is a strong feeling in government circles that only schools with serious weaknesses need sustained support. The government has provided funds to LEAs for helping such schools (DFE 1994), and has provided advice to LEAs on seconding proven head teachers to take charge of them (DFEE 1998b). Recent statements from the Prime Minister (Blair 1999) and the Chief Inspector of Schools (OFSTED 2000) confirm this view. Alternative strategies to contend with areas of educational under-achievement, for example the creation of Education Action Zones, have been interpreted as a threat to the future existence of LEAs (Wilby 1998).

These five elements suggest the necessity of a district system which is both ideologically committed and primarily focused upon the improvement of teaching and learning in schools. The system should provide training and advice to its schools on the collection of data, the use of data to inform policy, and the skills to manage and implement change. It should be developing the capacity of its schools to improve, and by so doing be working towards its own redundancy.

School Conditions for School Improvement

The feelings of educational malaise, of the need for systemic change and increased accountability, and the culture of turbulence and uncertainty which these feelings induce, are as apparent at school level as they are at district and national level. The legislation of the late 1980s and the 1990s has taken from English schools a large part of their formal control of the curriculum, but has handed over to them the wherewithal to control how the new prescribed curriculum is delivered. This control of the process of curriculum delivery is circumscribed to a considerable extent by the centrally-controlled accountability system of which OFSTED is a part. OFSTED inspects how individual schools deliver the curriculum, and part of that inspection process looks at

> *whether the school has the capacity, that is, the strategy and systems in place, to secure improvement or maintain high standards.*
>
> (OFSTED 1997: 5)

One of the dilemmas which OFSTED, and other school improvers, have had to resolve has been

> *How can an ethos of high expectations be created in a context where there is little cause for optimism?*
>
> (Hopkins 1999a)

In other words, how can schools that are deemed to have serious weaknesses or to be failing improve?

OFSTED itself recognises the importance of a school's cultural conditions as well as systemic arrangements in achieving improvement in student outcomes:

> *Improvement is often brought about by the insistence of a new headteacher ... on a change in the school's culture ...*
>
> (OFSTED 1994:41)

School improvers have seen the need to address the systemic arrangements in schools in order to impact upon the school culture:

> *To make the effective school work, we need improvement strategies that will mould teachers' cultures in such a way that pupil behaviour will change.*
>
> (Bollen 1996)

Within IQEA, this belief in the need to address the cultural conditions of the

school and the management arrangements simultaneously, in order to prepare the ground for sustained school improvement, has been an oft-repeated and central tenet of the project:

> *Strategies are needed that can deliver significant curriculum and teaching innovations, whilst at the same time adjusting the school's organisational characteristics or management arrangements.*
>
> (Hopkins 1991a)
>
> *We are increasingly realising that any change, be it externally or internally inspired, will be successful only to the extent that the school creates the conditions within which change and innovation can flourish.*
>
> (Ainscow et al. 1994b:1)

Failure to address such conditions and to develop the capacity to manage and promote change may lead to a failure to assimilate externally-imposed strategies, like the Literacy Strategy and Target-setting, effectively into the systems of a school. Such strategies become "bolt-ons" (Hopkins 1999b, 1999c), which schools feel are burdensome additions to everything else they are required to do, or the bringers of "momentary triumphs" (Worrall 1999) rather than genuine contributions to the capacity-building in a school.

One of the *cultural* conditions necessary for improvement at school level is that schools not only have to accept the need to improve, but that the suggested reforms need to appeal both intellectually and emotionally to teachers. Schools which take on external agendas for reform symbolically assimilate their objectives by "humanising" them, making them

comprehensible and palatable to their own school communities (Hargreaves 1997). The growing recognition of the need to "develop more 'contextually specific' school improvement strategies" (Stoll et al. 1996) suggests that reforms initiated by individual schools may be as useful in securing improvement as those imposed from outside. Our experience in IQEA suggests that these internally-driven reforms also require the intellectual and emotional support of staff to be successful.

The acceptance that "the basic climate of schools must become more oriented toward student learning" (Consortium for Chicago School Research 1995:64) implicitly acknowledges that the academic organisation of the school may need overhauling (Gray et al. 1999). It also implies that "change will not occur unless there is an alteration of power relationships among those in the system and within the classroom" (Sarason 1990), that schools need to be restructured and recultured away from isolated and individualised teacher activity to meet the needs and challenges of a collaborative approach to school improvement (Hargreaves 1995).

This openness to suggested change requires a high level of teacher collaboration, with staff working together to determine the aims and objectives of the school, and how they are to be achieved:

> *The types of school cultures most supportive of school improvement efforts appear to be those that are collaborative, have high expectations for both students and staff, exhibit a consensus on values ..., support an orderly and secure environment, and encourage teachers to assume a*

variety of leadership roles.

(Hopkins 1994)

Teachers need to collaborate in order to determine a school's priorities for action, to determine methods of implementation and to ensure that the impact of such collaboration is school-wide. Where a collaborative culture exists, the capacity is created to respond flexibly to external initiatives and internal pressures:

> *When faced with problems, ... people in 'moving' schools respond by adapting internal teaching, learning and organisational conditions. This changes the school's culture and enables them to surmount the difficulties.*
>
> (Stoll and Mortimore 1995)

Visible elements of a collaborative culture would include peer classroom observation, the use of school-based research (including feedback from students), staff discussion and debate on teaching methods, and peer coaching on teaching strategies (see, for example, Harry and Bisiker 1995). Schools with such features become learning organisations with open debate and mutual trust between members of staff (Hargreaves 1997).

Writers about school improvement, and especially those associated with the IQEA Project, suggest a symbiotic relationship between these cultural conditions, and the *systemic* conditions necessary for school improvement to take place. They suggest not only that they are mutually supportive but that

each also helps to sustain the other:

> *Improving schools pay attention to the 'conditions' which create the capacity for improvement within the school, and recognise that maintaining these conditions requires positive efforts.*
>
> (West 1995)

These systemic conditions have tended to be organised under the following headings:

1. The existence of structures which facilitate the collaboration of staff for school development. For a collaborative culture to be maintained, schools need to develop collaborative structures that allow collaborative teacher activities to take place, that are not vulnerable to changes in teaching personnel (Myers 1995b), are not dependent upon the whim of principals for their existence or effective functioning, and have "teachers as leaders rather than as committee members to advise the principal" (Midgley and Wood 1993). The prime function of these collaborative structures needs to be school review:

> *A healthy school is one where teachers constantly revisit and renew their purposes, always looking for evidence and feedback about how well they are doing, and honestly examining whether they need to do things differently or better.*
>
> (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998)

Schools can support these collaborative structures through "strategic human

resource management programmes" which include establishing staff selection criteria geared to sustaining a collaborative culture, creating an induction process for staff in collaborative activities, and organising team-building and professional development activities (Carlin 1995). Those professional development activities should include those where

> *teachers formally and explicitly share their craft knowledge and teach each other pedagogic skills.*
>
> (Southworth 1998)

Others suggest that it is appropriate in such schools to include involvement in collaborative group enquiry in teachers' job descriptions (Joyce et al. 1999). A radical restructuring in a school district in Ontario led to schools replacing traditional subject departments with teacher groupings around facilitators charged with overseeing various functions in the school, like assessment. These functions, and subsequent groupings, were reviewed annually, so that

> *organisational restructuring ... supported change capacity as individuals collectively addressed the common direction for the school and created structures to facilitate such change.*
>
> (Hannay and Ross 1999)

Collaborative group enquiry should seek at least to canvass the views of the school community, including parents (Dalin 1994, Long and Pinder 1995, Consortium on Chicago School Research 1995, Hargreaves 1997), and at best to secure the active participation of its members (Fielding and Cooper 1998, Joyce et al. 1999).

PAGE
MISSING
IN
ORIGINAL

> *The approach to planning taken by the school leader can have a positive and developmental impact on the organisational conditions of the school.*
>
> (Hopkins 1996)

Where a strong degree of democratic decision-making already exists in a school, experience within the IQEA Project has shown that the collaborative structures created to facilitate school improvement have been effective, because Heads have not bridled at comparatively junior members of staff, near the bottom rungs of the management structure of the school, taking on leadership roles in development activities (see, for example, Jackson 1999). This diffusion or dispersal of leadership is also a feature of school development elsewhere (see, for example, Louis et al. 1994).

4. The availability of external consultants. In looking at 12 schools in an Improving Schools project in England, the authors of the report saw "few signs that the schools had engaged in lengthy analyses of their situations" prior to their involvement (Gray et al. 1999: 140). Similarly in a study of 9 Scandinavian schools, it was reported that

> *The teachers and the school leaders need help to diagnose their own school situation, and to be supported in their efforts to achieve the aims of the school.*
>
> (Ekholm and Kull 1996)

Clearly schools have differing levels of expertise in undertaking their own

research and data analysis, so the availability of local assistance of the type outlined in the previous section on school districts, or of advice from Higher Education as offered in the IQEA Project, is a key condition in enabling some school improvement projects to progress. Indeed, the mere presence of external consultants has acted as a spur to, as well as a facilitator of, school improvement (Ainscow and Southworth 1995, Haggarty and Postlethwaite 1995). There is a growing recognition that the cultural and systemic conditions for school improvement vary from school to school, that is that schools differ in the state of their readiness for school improvement, and that different schools need different kinds of help from outside agents (Stoll et al. 1996, Hopkins et al. 1997b, Harris 1999).

Classroom Conditions for School Improvement

Where the focus for school improvement at national, district and school levels is on teaching and learning, it is unsurprising that particular attention has also been paid to the cultural and systemic conditions necessary within the classroom for improvement to take place. The IQEA Project has made a prominent contribution to the related literature (Beresford 1995a, West et al. 1995, Hopkins et al. 1997a, Hopkins et al. 1998).

Teachers teach in a climate where their teaching performance is assessed periodically by OFSTED, according to published criteria (OFSTED 1999a, OFSTED 1999b, OFSTED 1999c). Financial incentives have been provided by the government to encourage individual teachers to improve their teaching,

and teaching effectiveness within the incentive scheme is judged partly on an individual teacher's contribution to their students' academic performance (DFEE 1998d). It was argued above that this externally-driven impetus for teachers to improve is complemented in some schools by a collective will amongst staff to improve teaching. In such schools within the IQEA Project it has been apparent that the *cultural* conditions necessary for improving teaching and learning are more likely to be present than in schools where this collective will is missing.

The learning of students is central to the activities undertaken in such classrooms. Learning is talked about, aspects of learning (like homework) are explained and justified, teachers and students get excited about learning, it is acknowledged as a struggle for some people, it is extolled, and the learning skills of peers are respected and used (Scottish CCC 1996, Doddington et al. 1999, Flutter et al. 1999). Teachers acknowledge that they are still learning, and model ways of learning for their students:

> *In a community of learners, the most important role of teacher and principal is that of head learner ...*
>
> (Barth 1996)

For example, where teachers want their students to evaluate and assess their own work, they model problem-solving strategies for them (Black and Wiliam 1998a, Black and Wiliam 1998b).

The importance of the quality of teacher-student interactions in determining

the culture of classrooms has received extensive coverage. Classroom teaching and learning has been characterised as a common enterprise with teachers and students sharing a joint responsibility for acquiring knowledge (Hendley 1978). As such it is necessary for effective learning that teachers do not alienate students, and that they establish positive social relationships with them. OFSTED inspectors are advised that

> *you will learn much about the ethos of the school by observing the quality of relationships ... between pupils and staff.*
>
> (OFSTED 1999a:39)

Effective secondary teachers of tutorial groups, for example, are honest while exercising authority, relaxed and approachable, accepting and open to negotiation, concerned without being cloying, and understanding of their students' family backgrounds (Adams 1987). Effective learning takes place at infant level where pupils are sufficiently confident in their relationship with their teacher both to interrupt in order to ask questions (Campbell 1986), and to take a meaningful part in discussion and review of what they are doing (Stallings 1980).

Teachers who show respect to their students, who are fair, who help them and show interest in them, who provide a safe environment for students to experiment with different behaviours and approaches to learning, and who pay attention to securing students' self-esteem are more likely to improve students' learning than those who ignore these aspects (Munn et al. 1990, Rudduck et al. 1996b, Morgan and Morris 1999). Such regard applies as much

to Primary as to Secondary students:

> *Transforming schools is about teachers who understand, act on behalf of, and work with the perspectives of primary pupils.*
>
> (Thiessen 1998)

Within such relationships, students respond positively to the high expectations expressed by teachers (West et al. 1995, Creemers 1994, Hopkins 1995, Hopkins et al. 1997a, Hopkins et al. 1998), they are more likely to approach teachers for help (Black and Wiliam 1998a) and to be better behaved (Haroun and O'Hanlon 1997). Good student-teacher relations are also necessary if teachers are to undertake worthwhile classroom-based research into their teaching practices (O'Hanlon 1992).

The *systemic* conditions, or organisational features, necessary to improve learning in the classroom have been described under the following headings:

1. The provision of an ordered learning environment.

The maintenance of order in the classroom is widely recognised as a key element in effective lessons (Munn et al. 1990, Creemers 1994, Bleach 1997, Hopkins et al. 1997a, Hopkins et al. 1998). This is acknowledged in the inspection process in England:

> *For all pupils, good behaviour is a pre-requisite for effective learning.*
>
> (OFSTED 1999a:39)

Students learn best when they are clear about the parameters and rules system within the classroom. These elements contribute to what has been called elsewhere an "authentic relationship" between teacher and pupils, that which

> *seeks growth and empowerment, [and is] neither submissive nor subordinate, nor superior, but aligned with the students in following their endeavours and achieving the goals of the school.*
>
> (Brandes and Ginnis 1990:30)

Teachers also need contingency strategies for restoring order (Cullingford 1988, Christie et al. 1999).

2. The deployment of a range of teaching strategies.

Most current definitions of effective classroom teaching suggest that classroom teachers should employ a wide teaching repertoire (see, for example, Sammons et al. 1995, Harris 1995, Hopkins et al. 1997a), that is have at their fingertips a variety of ways of delivering the curriculum. This repertoire needs to cater for pupils of different ages and abilities in a variety of physical settings and groupings in order that an appropriate education can be delivered to all students (Creemers 1994), and so that the values and aspirations of teachers can "infuse the ethos of their classrooms" (Hansen 1993). Hence the development of a teacher's repertoire can help address issues of social justice and equity as well as effectiveness.

Teachers are more likely to engender a respect for learning, and to embrace more of their students in the learning process, if they deploy a wide range of

teaching strategies (Beresford 1999b). Teachers with a wide repertoire of teaching models are more able to adapt their teaching according to what they wish to teach (Blatchford and Kutnick 1996, Scottish CCC 1996, Joyce et al. 1997, Morgan and Morris 1999), to respond to the different learning styles of their students (Kolb 1984, Beresford 1999b) and to react flexibly and positively to negative student feedback during a lesson (Spaulding 1997).

3. Learning as a planned activity.

Teachers need to plan both long-term programmes and short-term learning experiences for their students (Creemers 1994, Kyriacou 1998), taking into account the time and material resources available, the content they wish to teach and the characteristics of the students they are teaching, as well as their own teaching strengths (and weaknesses) (Brown and McIntyre 1993). Knowledge and understanding of students' backgrounds constitute important elements in teaching if a supportive social relationship is to be established by the teacher (Hendley 1978). Socio-cultural factors in students' backgrounds often influence their ways of learning, their behaviour and their modes of communication (Bartolome 1994, Creemers 1994). These in turn impinge upon students' performances in the classroom (Birmingham City Council Education Department 1994, Birmingham City Council Education Department 1995a, Birmingham City Council Education Department 1995c, Boseley 1995).

The planning also needs to take into account the importance of logistical factors like the physical lay-out of the room, and where individual students

choose to sit (Moore and Glynn 1984, Wheldall et al. 1981, Wheldall and Lam 1987).

4. Evaluation of Teaching and Learning.

There is a long tradition of classroom-based action research providing data for the processes of reflection and evaluation of teaching. This research can be undertaken by skilled colleagues or external consultants (Walker and Adelman 1975, Good and Brophy 1978, Croll 1986, Bell and Arnold 1987, Hopkins 1991b, West 1992, Hopkins 1992), or indeed through what has been termed 'reflection-in-action', where the teacher's own observations and inferences based upon those observations are used (House et al. 1989, Altrichter and Posch 1989). Teachers also evaluate their teaching by assessing and monitoring their students' learning (Southworth 1998, Kyriacou 1998) and by inviting feedback from students (see King Harold School with the University of Cambridge Institute of Education 1995, Sharnbrook Upper School 1995).

Because these processes are grounded in the teacher's own "craft-knowledge", the findings are less theoretical, more practical and more applicable to similar classroom contexts within the school (O'Hanlon 1991, McFee 1993, Pimenoff 1995).When such processes take place in a supportive school environment, then the collaborative structures are already in place to effect change and improvement, for example to replicate proven changes in teaching practice (Hayes and Ross 1989, Winston 1992).

Summary.

School improvement is likely to be high on the political agenda after a period of high inflation has raised questions about value for money in the public services. International comparisons with more affluent nations intensify the outcry for change in a range of practices, including those in the educational and industrial domains. New technologies and communications systems require industry to adapt and seek new markets, and education systems to respond to these new demands.

In England the response has been to specify what students are to be taught in schools, and to monitor how well specifications relating to teaching are met at the school level. Administration of the school system has been largely devolved to the school as cost centre, bypassing the district infrastructure which has largely been reduced to a consultancy function. Successive governments have sought to make systemic adjustments to address issues of justice and equity exposed in the monitoring process, including changes in the curriculum to reflect the changing needs of the workplace.

Schools have responded best where staff have shown themselves open to new ideas and prepared to take and collaborate on new initiatives relating to teaching and learning, where they have been prepared to undertake training and have used external consultants. In the classroom effective teachers have responded by providing planned learning experiences in an ordered working environment, using and evaluating a wide range of teaching strategies and

models.

Figure 3 presents a summary in graph form of the climatic, cultural and systemic conditions for school improvement at the various levels covered by this literature review. Systemic conditions appear in the four small boxes, cultural conditions within the larger box embracing the four levels and what I have termed climatic conditions appear outside this larger box.

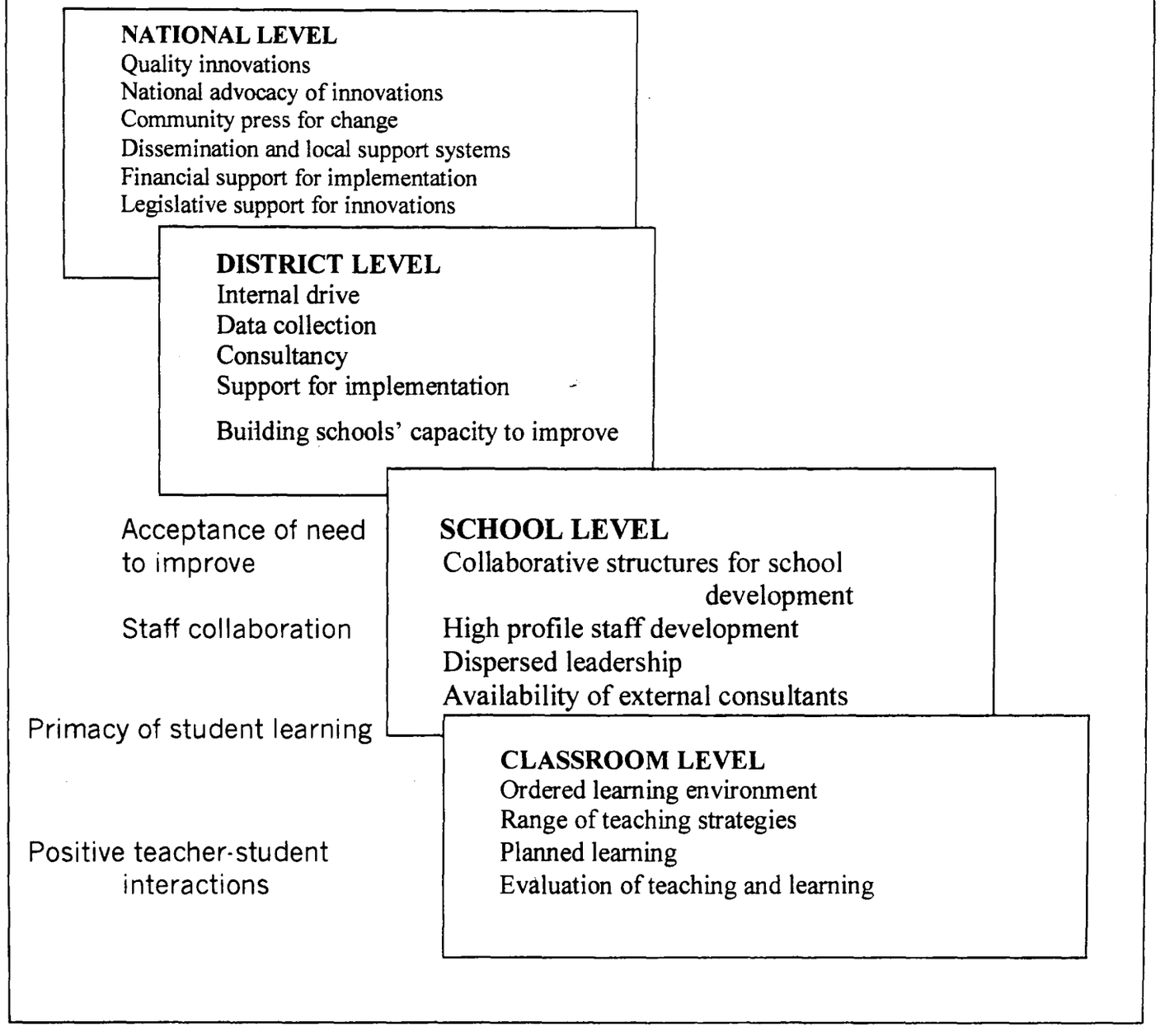
Falling behind international competitors

Urban under-achievement

Accountability

Value for money

Performance -related pay



Equity and justice

Devolution

Local Management of Schools

Finding a new role

Figure 3: Climatic, Cultural and Systemic Conditions for School Improvement

Deriving the Student Conditions

Part of the Introduction argued that students' views of the classroom conditions in their schools constituted a critical element of school improvement initiatives. It was further argued that the Classroom and Management Conditions Surveys were not in a form where students could give meaningful responses, partly because many of the associated behaviours itemised in the surveys were invisible to students. Using each of the headings of the previous section, this section seeks to derive a set of classroom conditions in a form recognisable to students.

Students many not necessarily have an overview of the curriculum they are taught as

> *both a sharply focused representation of the values, meanings and ways of life of the society and a source of knowledge, understanding, techniques, skills and strategies for social as well as personal development*
>
> (Skilbeck 1985)

but they will be aware of systemic adjustments to that curriculum where successive governments seek to redress perceived shortcomings. The broadening of the post-16 syllabus to embrace AS levels and training in Key Skills, the introduction of Citizenships into the Secondary curriculum and the extension of the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies to Key Stage 3 will all have an impact upon students' daily experience at school. Similarly any changes in

the way the school is organised, its ceremonies and rituals, its discipline, its relationships

(Skilbeck 1994)

which give expression to the common qualities which the curriculum is seeking to embody, will have a profound impact upon students' working lives.

This chapter has outlined the pressures and forces, part of what I have called the climatic conditions, which have led governments to reappraise the nature of these common qualities in order to prepare students better for their working and social lives. The nature of these qualities have also been described. What happens in classrooms in terms of developing these qualities can therefore be assessed. More importantly to this study, an instrument can be derived which will enable us to gauge student's reactions to such activities. In short, students' comments on the Classroom Conditions for School Improvement can be given expression.

1. The Centrality of Learning

The critical requirement, in a world where knowledge and the means to communicate are proliferating and where industry and society are required to respond to new technologies, for students not only to want to learn but to *continue* to want to learn, has long been recognised. Callaghan's Ruskin speech called for an education system which developed "lively inquiring minds and the appetite for further knowledge that will last a lifetime" (Callaghan 1976). The Labour Party's aim of Excellence for Everyone called

for an education system that would

> *light a flame to provide a love of learning and a will to succeed for every child.*
>
> (Labour Party 1995)

Such a requirement means that learning needs to be regarded as an enjoyable as well as worthwhile activity. The government's recent initiative on teaching in the foundation subjects in Key Stage 3, with its "focus on improving motivation and engagement" (DFEE 2001d), recognises this. For the teacher, building appropriate attitudes to learning becomes "a crucial part of teaching and learning" (Nisbet 1994). For the student, building a self-image as a learner becomes equally crucial. The ability of students to respond to teacher motivation, to learn to be self-motivated in order to want to continue learning when there is no teacher, and ultimately to enjoy learning, what we might collectively describe as a positive orientation to learning, would appear to be an important Student Condition for school improvement.

2. ***The Quality of teacher-student interactions***.

Clearly the emphasis upon teachers engaging and motivating students places a premium on good teacher-student relationships. Giddens is again helpful here. The communication of knowledge at a time when knowledge if constantly proliferating is a process requiring a high degree of trust in those communicating, be they car mechanics, building labourers or teachers. Trust is required because those in receipt of the knowledge cannot possible know

more than a small part of the process being communicated. Such 'facework commitments', as Giddens calls them, therefore

> *tend to be heavily dependent upon what might be called the demeanour* [his emphasis] *of system representatives or operators.*
>
> (Giddens 1990: 85)

Where car mechanics or teachers fail to engage those with whom they are communicating,

> *bad experiences at access points may lead either to a sort of resigned cynicism or ... to disengagement from the system altogether.*
>
> (Ibid.: 91)

The need to engage is seen as the joint responsibility of communicator and receiver:

> *Trust on a personal level becomes a project, to be 'worked at' by the parties involved, and demands the opening out of the individual to the other* [his emphasis].
>
> (Ibid.: 121)

Crucially for the teacher,

> *where it cannot be controlled by fixed normative codes, trust has to be won* [his emphasis], *and the means of doing this is demonstrable warmth and openness.*
>
> (Ibid.)

For students, an affinity to teachers that enables them to maintain a relationship with teachers, which allows them to seek and receive help and support when they require it, as well as to respond to the motivation already

identified as an important factor in developing positive attitudes to lifelong learning, is an important student condition for improving learning in the classroom.

3. *The provision of an ordered learning environment*

Most jobs, as well as flexibility and creativity, require qualities of punctuality and co-operation, what the Confederation of British Industry described as "the norms for behaviour in working situations" in its submission on the proposed education reforms of 1988 (Haviland 1988). For schools, such working norms include attendance at school and adherence to codes of conduct in the classroom and outside. When students do not attend school, they may miss key elements of the learning necessary for their future working and social lives, for example the ability to work with others. Where they do not adhere to school behaviour norms, they may have the "bad experiences at access points" referred to above by Giddens, which may in turn lead to disengagement and de-motivation. Clearly this is less likely to happen where there is

> *greater and more constructive student involvement in the planning and conduct of their education*
>
> (Hughes 1994)

and where students have some say in the establishment of school norms:

> *to teach about responsibility must imply a willingness to give responsibility.*
>
> (Hughes and Skilbeck 1944)

4. *The deployment of a range of teaching strategies*

Within developing industrial countries, teachers need to use a range of teaching styles and strategies in order to make teaching more interesting to more students (Yamagiwa 1994), to embrace the learning styles of a greater number of students (Beresford 1999b) and to help students to learn how to learn and re-learn (OECD 1994). Students need a battery of learning strategies to cope with the learning demands which may be made upon them in their future working lives and to solve work problems which require a range of skills and approaches (Young 1993). The development of learning autonomy, where learning can take place independently of teaching, is fast becoming a key work skill:

> *Learning in remote locations, with or without others, will become easier, so the ability to learn autonomously will be important.*
>
> (Wragg 1997)

The development of students' learning repertoire, where they are able to exploit fully the range of teaching and learning strategies encountered in and out of the classroom is thus an important condition in enhancing student learning capacity.

5. *Learning as a planned activity*

Learning on the job, either alone or in teams, has been identified as a key skill for the present and future workforce. For the student this translates into the

ability to learn away from the teacher, for example at home or in groups. For teachers it means

> *Ensuring that pupils are actively involved in the learning process, are aware of where they need to improve, have the skills to make the necessary next steps and have the self-esteem and confidence to take on the challenge.*
>
> (DFEE 2001b)

It requires teachers to provide classroom opportunities to teach and develop independent learning skills – groupwork, paired work, independent research opportunities, problem-solving opportunities. It requires in students the ability to access the skills and resources necessary for them to achieve learning autonomy.

6. *Evaluation of teaching and learning*

An important element of learning autonomy is the ability to reflect, self-assess and evaluate. The government's Key Skills Strategy (QCA 2000) recognises this importance. For example, it requires students at level 1 who are seeking to improve their own learning and performance to

> *give your opinion on what you have learned, how you have learned, what has gone well and what has gone less well.*
>
> (Ibid.)

At a higher level students are asked to

> *Assess your skill-development needs by identifying the gap between your current capabilities and the demands of the work in terms of*

communication, problem-solving and working with others.

(Ibid.)

The ability to evaluate their own learning involves students assessing the effectiveness and scope of their learning repertoire, their ability to learn independently, the quality of their relationships with their teachers and the extent of their adjustment to school expectations and norms. In short the ability to reflect upon and to improve the quality of their own work is a 'lynchpin' condition for students.

The relationship between the various school and classroom level conditions is shown in Figure 4. The Student Conditions, and the Classroom Conditions from which they were derived, are presented in Figure 5. Given that both sets of conditions relate to the classroom, I have renamed for the purposes of identification the Classroom Conditions as Teacher Conditions, inasmuch as they relate mainly to teacher behaviours (in much the same way that Student Conditions relate mainly to student behaviours). The descriptions of each Teacher Condition are taken from the IQEA team's work on Classroom Conditions (Hopkins et al. 1997:10).

School Level Condition	Enabling Condition	Teacher Condition	Student Condition
Teacher's workplace	Staff development	Teacher's repertoire	Learning repertoire
School and its community	Involvement	Authentic relationships	Affinity to teachers
Transformational leadership	Leadership	Pedagogic partnerships	Orientation to learning
Working across the levels	Co-ordination	Rules and boundaries	Adjustment to school
Utilising school level data	Enquiry and reflection	Reflection on teaching	Self-assessment
Planning for development and maintenance	Collaborative planning	Planning, resources and preparation	Independent learning

Figure 4: The enabling conditions for school improvement (modified)

Teacher Condition.	Student Condition.
Authentic Relationships *The quality, openness and congruence of relationships existing in the classroom*	Affinity to teachers *The ability of students to maintain a relationship with teachers that enables them to seek and receive help and support when they require it*
Boundaries and Expectations *The pattern of expectations set by the teacher and school of student performance and behaviour within the classroom*	Adjustment to school *The ability of students to learn within a structured environment of rules and behaviour parameters*
Planning for Teaching *The access of teachers to a range of pertinent teaching materials and the ability to plan and differentiate those materials for a range of students*	Independent Learning *The ability of students to access the skills and resources necessary to achieve learning autonomy*
Teaching Repertoire *The range of teaching styles and models available for use by a teacher, dependent on student, context, curriculum and desired outcome*	Learning Repertoire *The ability of students to exploit fully the range of teaching and learning strategies encountered in and out of the classroom*
Pedagogic Partnerships *The ability of teachers to form professional relationships within and outside the classroom that focus on the study and improvement of practice*	Orientation to Learning *The ability of students to be self-motivated, and to enjoy learning*
Reflection on Teaching *The capacity of the individual teacher to reflect on his or her own practice, and to put to the test of practice, specifications of teaching from other sources*	Self-assessment *The ability of students to reflect upon and to improve the quality of their own work*

Figure 5: Teacher and Student Conditions

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

We called in John and his questionnaire

So the students could answer, get a chance to air

Their opinions on their learnin', their view on the teachin'

So we can a get a picture of the ones we're reachin'.

(Extract from Da Research Rap, composed by a teacher

at a Walsall IQEA school, March 2001)

While the national, district, school and what we have re-named the teacher conditions each have their own discrete literature, student conditions do not. For the purpose of this thesis, to produce an instrument through which to canvass the views of students on the classroom conditions for improving teaching and learning, it was necessary to search one out.

The Literature Review

Deriving the student conditions had enabled a form of words to be devised which helped to provide a notion of the domain covered by each of the conditions (Figure 4). From this form of words and some knowledge of each domain, itself derived from my own work as IQEA Research Officer, it was possible to create lists of key words for each condition. These key words were then fed into research databases, like the British Educational Research database, know as ERIC. The key words used were as follows:

Affinity to teachers	Teacher personality / teaching style / teacher – pupil relations / disruptive pupils / classroom relations / motivation.
Adjustment to school	School rules / pupil behaviour / attendance / pastoral care.
Independent Learning	Independent learning / learning autonomy / groupwork / study skills / research skills / homework / problem-solving.
Learning Repertoire	Teaching strategies / effective teaching / learning styles.
Orientation to Learning	Motivation / pupil self-esteem / homework / teaching.
Self-assessment	Self-assessment / pupil self-assessment / formative assessment / target setting.

Clearly some searches were more productive than others. The result of the search using 'effective teaching' for example, meant that only a few other searches were needed to supplement the references produced. To produce a similar volume of literature for the condition 'affinity to teachers', a whole series of key words had to be used. As the focus of this thesis is the viewpoint of students, I particularly concentrated on articles which reported students' views.

In addition to published research databases I also accessed my own which I have compiled in the six or so years that I have been IQEA Research Officer. This consists of some 1800 books and articles I have read and placed in a card-index, as well as categorised under broad headings like School Improvement and School Effectiveness, but also under more specific ones like Homework and Target-setting. This means that I could interrogate my own database using the keywords I had used for the electronic literature search.

The literature searches fulfilled a number of functions. Firstly, they were intended to give further substance to the description of each condition. Secondly, arising from the first, they would identify student behaviours associated with each condition. Thirdly, they would identify research questions which could be used to organise the empirical data collected in working on the PhD thesis.

Each of the subsequent chapters on each condition use the literature in this way.

Collecting and Organising Empirical Research Data.

Collecting data was not the straightforward process it appears to be in the production of most PhDs. The reason for this lies in my role as IQEA Research Officer. Part of the formal contract which individual schools or LEAs agree to on enlisting in an IQEA project entitles each school in the project to a certain amount of my time as researcher.

The purpose of the research I undertake is to provide schools with data relating to issues which are important to the learning of their students. This may take the form of mapping and recording the opinions of members of the school community. This is normally done by formal interviews of individuals or groups, or by questionnaire. It may take the form of an audit, which provides baseline data for purposes of comparison when a particular initiative has been

introduced. It may involve tracking students in order to gauge the educational experience they enjoy in the course of a day.

Much of this research involves my presence in the school. The greater proportion has involved interviewing students. Some has involved sitting and researching in classrooms during lessons. While a number of teachers have admitted to being nervous during such observations, an equal number have felt relaxed. I have consistently stressed the non-threatening and non-judgmental nature of audits. With teachers being increasingly observed judgmentally in inspections and performance management reviews, this nervousness is likely to subside.

My role is therefore one of data-provider. I try to have as little say, and therefore as little investment, as possible in how the data is used to inform future planning. While this is getting increasingly difficult it does mean that I can be used in the evaluation process once the planned initiative has been implemented. Where schools insist that I make recommendations relating to such initiatives, then subsequent objective evaluation is well nigh impossible.

There are a number of reasons why this research element is built into each project. Firstly it establishes and maintains a high profile for data collection in the schools involved, and the analysis of that data. It thus provides part of the basis for developing the condition of enquiry and reflection in the school. It may also complement and enrich any school-based research undertaken by teachers.

The research undertaken by the Officer can also provide a model for the school-based research, which teachers inexperienced in such research may want to undertake. The 'research time' can also be utilised by schools to train staff in research techniques.

Research by someone external to the school can reduce the chores attached to research, like literature searches. It can also provide external validation for research findings as well as the viewpoint of someone who has knowledge of the school involved, but does not share, perhaps, the emotional attachment and personal investment of the teacher-researchers in the school.

Finally the Research Officer is able to do things that teachers in the school might find difficult. One of these is getting authentic responses in interviews about teaching and learning from students that teachers meet on a daily basis. Such interviews constitute a large proportion of the work I do on behalf of schools.

Within IQEA we assume that each school will want to follow its own reform agenda. The improvement focus is one chosen by the school and I am often able to offer advice on the research programme that they invariably undertake to inform any school development related to that focus. Typically, having agreed on the type of research appropriate to the programme, I am asked to advise on the working of questionnaires and interview schedules, or on appropriate observation schedules. I am also asked, both from a logistical point

of view as well as one of appropriateness, about the size and nature of the sample of staff or students that they wish to be questioned.

This means I undertake a great deal of school-based research, much of which involves canvassing the views of students. Many of the individual projects have sought the views of groups of students on teaching and learning in the school. Having worked in over 100 schools, nearly all of them Secondary, in my six years in post, I have collected data from what I estimate to be over 200 discrete research projects. Each project has been the subject of a written report. I thus have a huge database, some of which is not relevant to this present study. But much of it is.

I was therefore able to interrogate this large database using the research questions derived from the literature review. This involved going through the schedules attached to each of these reports in order to identify identical or similar questions asked of the particular cohort of students. This has been made easier in most cases because of the way the reports are structured. They often consist of reported responses to individual questions.

Within the three years 1997-2000 I was able to use data from about 60 of the two hundred research projects, nearly all in Secondary schools, where I had, in part or in whole, investigated some of the questions thrown up by the literature review. The reports of these research projects are attached to this work in anonymised form as Appendices. Each report specifies the sample and type of interrogation used in the research.

One of the conditions - Learning Repertoire - enabled me to make direct comparisons between more than a handful of schools, because the questions asked by the various schools exactly matched my own research questions. Hence Chapter 6 stands as a discrete research project in its own right, and for this reason the various reports from which this chapter was drawn have not been reproduced in the Appendices. For the other conditions I have had to draw on a more diffuse range of projects where my own research questions matched a variable proportion of those that the school wanted to ask. This has made a synthesis of findings more difficult, but by no means impossible. The work of Yin on multi-case studies proved useful in this respect. In reporting generalised findings from a range of projects, he suggested that

> *There may be no separate chapters or sections devoted to individual cases. Rather, the entire report may consist of the cross-case analysis ... In such a report, each chapter or section would be devoted to a separate cross-case issue, and the information from the individual cases would be dispersed throughout each chapter or section. With this format, summary information about the individual cases ... might be presented in abbreviated vignettes.*
>
> (Yin 1989: 135)

Yin defines a case study as

> *A 'how' or 'why' question ... being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control.*
>
> (Yin ibid.: 20)

The nature of the investigation to be undertaken, and the position of the investigator within the research activity, appears to match my own in the IQEA schools. My position is one of detached interest. I have had no control over events in the school beyond identification with a team of external consultants who may have advocated the changes I may be researching. As one who undertakes a range of similar kinds of research in similar schools I am able to "review previous research to develop sharper and more insightful questions about the topic" (Yin ibid.: 20). The research process I undertake as IQEA Officer may thus be described as iterative, inasmuch as I am able to build upon the experience, expertise and insight gained from previous case studies as I undertake further work. As a student studying and researching for a PhD, this iterative process has facilitated the process of classifying and organising research data, as each new case study has refined the categories used and the questions asked. The process has enabled an ongoing review and reorganisation of data, where data have been revisited on a regular basis in order to provide valid and reliable comparisons.

The Yin paradigm appeared to provide a sensible way to proceed, condition by condition, towards producing a Student Conditions Survey. My "separate cross-case issue(s)" were the individual conditions, "information from the individual cases" is indeed "dispersed throughout each chapter", and "summary information about the individual cases" is, in part, given in at the end of this chapter. The next six chapters therefore review the literature relating to each Student Condition, rehearse the research questions thrown up

by the literature review, and present the data derived from the case study schools which help to answer those questions.

Collecting Student Data

While there are a number of useful general guides to collecting data in the classroom (see for example Croll 1986, Hopkins 1991, Hopkins 1992), my work in collecting data from students between 1997-2000 (the period of the PhD) and before has suggested to me that it requires a distinctive approach, different from the process, for example, of interviewing teachers.

For many schools new to IQEA, the act of consulting students on school processes represents a sea change in the way they regard students. Schools who tap into the intelligence of their students move from a view of those students as passive recipients of knowledge and expertise to one where students have a say about such knowledge and the way that it is delivered. Where teachers act upon such intelligence (and this is still by no means routine, even in IQEA schools), students' views help to shape the teaching and learning which goes on in the school.

For most students in most schools the process of being interviewed is a new and unusual experience. It is because of this novelty and because the data collected may be important in changing teaching and learning practices in the school, that the approach is distinctive. I have gone into some detail in describing the process because I believe it has a positive effect upon the authenticity of the views expressed by students.

There are at least four student attitudes for which the interviewer needs to allow, and which determine the approach to the interview. One is that adults in school who ask questions are generally in authority. The second is that adults do not usually invite the opinions of students on teaching and learning. A third is that absence from the classroom equates with being in trouble, or skiving off. Finally, adults in a school asking students questions often expect 'right' answers.

An important part of the interview is setting the tone. This is difficult where the interview room doubles as the 'time-out' room for disruptive students. It is easier, and increasingly Secondary schools have such rooms, where it is used only for interviews. I avoid putting tables between myself and the students being interviewed. Having such a barrier sets the tone as one of inquisition rather than the desired tone of informality. This is particularly important when students are being interviewed singly. I try to ensure that I do not necessarily get the most comfortable seat. I welcome the students – they may not have had much choice about whether they attended or not, but they are giving up their time. Welcoming them also maintains the tone of informality created by the seating arrangements and suggests to students that the occasion is something different from a normal lesson. This is a particularly important strategy where students arrive at the interview room in ones and twos – they are welcomed rather than being told off for being late.

I also thank them for being there. This tells the students they are doing me a favour, which they are. It subtly shifts the relationship to a more 'equal' footing. I then state the purpose of the interview. In so doing I try to maintain the premise that the students are doing a favour by providing the information. At this stage I might also indicate the wider implications of the research, for example that it will help to improve their learning in the classroom. I also stress the confidentiality of the process: this is often made more difficult when I am given a list of those I am interviewing, but explaining about the large number invariably being interviewed and telling students that "what you say will be taken down but not used in evidence against you" usually reassures them. Because I take field notes, the issue of getting students' permission to being taped does not arise.

Having established a tone of semi-seriousness and semi-informality and a relationship with the student interviewees which is at least different from that between teacher and students, I deliberately start with an ice-breaking question which asks for the students' opinions. I then ask the four or so questions which are central to the research being undertaken. I make sure that everyone in the group gets the opportunity to express their views. I end the interview by thanking the students again for their time and wishing them a pleasant day.

A number of the 60 projects involved classroom observation. This is a more common experience now for students than being interviewed: lessons are observed by heads of department in their monitoring role, by threshold assessors and by inspectors. I try to arrive at lessons, where possible, before

they start so that I can check with the teacher the best vantage point, and the one least likely to upset students whose seat I may have inadvertently taken. When I am (rarely) approached by curious students whether during or at the end of the lesson, I explain the purpose of my visit in general terms, like "I'm looking at the range of learning experiences you are getting in the lesson." Where appropriate, I might show the observation schedule I am using.

I also add a note thanking students for the time they have taken to fill in any questionnaires I use. For the distribution of questionnaires I am dependent upon the communication systems of individual schools. They are, of course, as interested as I am in collecting and analysing returns, so questionnaires are invariably distributed and filled in during school time. This ensures a high rate of return.

Notwithstanding that the collection of data for this PhD has not been straightforward, the eagerness that the schools have shared with me for undertaking and reporting on the research has been critical. It has meant that the logistical processes of organising times, venues and samples have, I suspect, been easier for me than other PhD students, dependent as they usually are upon their own devices and their ability to create and maintain the goodwill of schools in which they are researching.

The Case Study Schools

Some details of each of the schools which commissioned the 60 or so projects used in this study are presented in the introductory section of each project

report. They provide information about the particular IQEA Project to which the school belongs, the particular focus of the school improvement project within the school and the place of the particular piece of research in the improvement project. Some schools have commissioned more than one piece of research in the period 1997-2000.

All of the schools have been involved in the various IQEA Projects which have been running between 1997 and 2000. Schools attached to the Cambridge-based project, which ended in 1999, joined IQEA as individual recruits, rather than as part of an LEA-sponsored initiative, which has been the pattern of recruitment for schools in the Nottingham-based projects. All schools to date, and so all of those featured in this work, have been volunteers.

The schools in this study are broadly representative of the wide range of Secondary provision in England and Wales. They are drawn from a range of geographical settings, from affluent and leafy towns and villages on the fringes of London and Bedford to inner-city areas of Nottingham and Derbyshire. Sizes of schools range from 500 to over 1500 students, performance in public examinations range from single-figure percentages of A*-C passes at GCSE to the eighties. A number have been in Special Measures after OFSTED inspections, and one has closed. Another is a Beacon School. Two of the schools are single-sex, one all-boy and one all-girl. Most cater for the 11-16 age-group, some for 11-18s and a few are upper schools catering for 13-18s. Figure 5 gives comparative data for each of the schools included in this study.

The table gives the number or letter of the case study. Numbers refer to those case studies listed and reproduced in the appendix. Letters refer to the various projects used in Chapter 6. The data on school rolls and the percentage of A* to C passes achieved at GCSE relate to the year in which the research study was undertaken. Public examination data are not given for schools in the Primary sector.

Key.

Comp	Comprehensive School
Upper	Upper School (13-18)
B	All-boys' school
G	All-girls' school
BG	Mixed school

Case studies	Location of school	Type	Sex	Date of CS	No. on roll	% A*-C
1	Nottingham	Comp	BG	2000	1454	42
2	North Nottinghamshire	Comp	BG	1998	1009	49
3	Newark	Comp	BG	1998	1003	34
4,5,H	NE Derbyshire	Comp	BG	1997 1998	1060 1085	36 46
6	Merthyr	Junior	BG	2000	141	-
7	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1998	689	9
8,11,13,22,23, 24,30,32,35, 36,43,44	North Hertfordshire	Comp	B	1998 1999 2000	1110 1118 1104	80 78 83
9,42	Derby	Comp	BG	1998	942	19
10	SW Bedfordshire	Upper	BG	1999	1290	66
12,31	Outer London	Comp	BG	1999 2000	1167 1197	67 60
14,56	East Nottinghamshire	Comp	BG	1999	1163	55
15	SE Essex	Comp	BG	1998	1694	58
16,D	Outer London	Comp	BG	1998	1077	67
17	Nottingham	Comp	G	1997	569	23
18	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1997	475	23
19,50	Dunstable	Upper	BG	2000	1182	57
20 (also 6)	Merthyr Merthyr Merthyr Merthyr Merthyr	Infants Junior Junior Primary Primary	BG BG BG BG BG	1999 1999 1999 1999 1999	112 228 141 206 306	- - - - -
21,34,52,G	Cambridge	Comp	BG	1997	598	75
25,38,F	Outer London	Comp	BG	1997 1998	772 794	25 33
26,48	South Nottinghamshire	Comp	BG	1998	1052	55
27	Mansfield	Upper	BG	2000	583	18
28,51	Nottingham	Comp	BG	2000	1286	54
29	Cambridge	Comp	BG	1997	551	23
33,39	Cambridge	Comp	BG	1997	360	25
37	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1999	586	25
40	Mansfield	Comp	BG	1998	1084	56
41,45	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1997 1998	490 517	40 26
46	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1999	529	21
47	East Bedfordshire	Upper	BG	1997	1433	68
49,E	Derby	Comp	BG	1997 1998	424 435	2 6
53	Nottingham	Comp	BG	1997	621	6
54	NW Nottinghamshire	Comp	BG	1999	1018	32
55	Worksop	Comp	BG	2001	616	36
57	NE Derbyshire	Comp	BG	1997	967	31
A	Sheffield	Comp	BG	1998	1046	53
B	Basildon	Comp	BG	1996	1031	24
C	Derby	Comp	BG	1997	676	19

FIGURE 6: The Case Study Schools

Piloting the Student Conditions Survey

Student behaviours associated with the six student conditions were identified from each of chapters 3 to 8, and these behaviours were collated into a Student Conditions Survey. To date the Students Conditions Survey has been piloted in over 40 schools across all phases. The instrument for primary-aged students is still being developed, and has been used in about ten schools. The data presented in chapter 9 are from 41 secondary schools, embracing nearly 6000 students. The sample is comprised as follows:

Location of Schools	Type	Numbers	Gender
Swansea	Comprehensive	5	BG
Swansea	Comprehensive	1	G
Bedfordshire	Middle	1	BG
Bedfordshire	Upper	16	BG
Nottinghamshire	Comprehensive	14	BG
Cambridge	Private	1	BG
Wirral	Comprehensive	1	G
Merthyr	Comprehensive	1	BG
SE Essex	Comprehensive	1	BG

Numbers of students to whom the survey has been administered are:

	Boys	Girls	Unmarked	Total
Year 7	373	420	23	816
Year 8	362	375	1	738
Year 9	698	650	15	1363
Year 10	530	598	19	1147
Year 11	492	540	20	1052
Year 12	261	247	8	516
Year 13	160	193	6	359
	2876	**3023**	**92**	**5991**

As with the case study schools, these represent a range in terms of geographical location and educational achievement. Their only common feature was an interest in administering the survey to their students: the schools in the Wirral, Cambridge and South-east Essex were not even members of IQEA projects. The large numbers in Years 9, 10 and 11 are explained by the comparatively large number of Upper Schools which showed an interest.

The sample of students to whom the survey was administered was left to individual schools, although the recommendation to a comprehensive school of around 1000 students was that they administered to two tutorial groups in each year. Such groups tend to be mixed ability as well as mixed gender groups, and give something near a 40% coverage of the year group.

The survey has already been modified in the light of our related research. Statement 1.1 originally read *At the end of each school day I think about what I've learnt.* When we questioned students about the low frequency of this behaviour, it was suggested to us that their main thoughts at the end of school were about getting home rather than the lessons they had attended that day. Many admitted they reflected upon their schoolwork when they arrived home, when they did their homework or at the end of lessons. We hope that the wording subsequently adopted cannot be taken quite so literally as the original wording. We also believe that student access to the internet at home is growing at such a rate that we will need to modify Statement 2.4 in the near future to make the resources used for doing research less specific.

The results from the pilot are the subject of a separate chapter, chapter 9. These results, along with the data from chapters 3 to 8, are intended to provide the basis for discussion, in chapter 10, of the implications of the research.

CHAPTER 3

Self-assessment

> *A coherent policy of self-assessment helps children to develop powers of reflection and self-criticism, encourages motivation by giving responsibility to children for their learning and by implying that their opinions matter; by providing essential feedback on how teaching is received, aids classroom management and emphasises the notion of partnership in the learning process.*
>
> (Towler and Broadfoot 1992)

The "reflexivity of modern social life" referred to in the Introduction (Giddens 1990) affects all those in education, teachers and students alike. The ability to process and make sense of the information derived from an ever-increasing number of sources is an important element for living and learning in a world of "reflexively applied knowledge" (Giddens ibid.). In such a world classrooms become places where teachers try to make sense of and apply the array of advice on how to teach, and where students try to make sense of the array of advice on how to learn.

Those involved in the IQEA Project, both external consultants and teachers, have regarded Enquiry and Reflection as "a most powerful classroom condition" (Hopkins et al. 1997a: 92) because they perceive that

> *teachers who are self-critical of their own practice as a matter of routine appear ... to be those teachers who have the most extensively developed repertoires, and also seem to be the teachers who are most aware of the many things that are happening in the classroom at any one time.*
>
> (Hopkins et al. 1997a: ibid.)

Within the project we have found that those schools in which teachers systematically collect and use classroom-based data, in part to evaluate the impact of their classroom practice, find it easier to sustain improvement efforts around established priorities, even in times of systemic change (see, for example, Hopkins et al. 1996, Beresford and Payne 1997, West and Beresford 1998).

There are well-documented cases, both within the IQEA Project (Jackson et al. 1998) and elsewhere (Restructuring Collaborative 1997), of students being involved in the formal collection of such data. Such cases, however, are rare, and the experiences of most students in reflection about what they do in school tends to be less formalised. This is not to say that it is any less important a condition in enabling students to make sense of what they do in schools than it is for those who teach them.

The Literature of Student Self-Assessment

In the same way that reflection and enquiry enable teachers to take control over, and personal responsibility for, their own teaching, this work would argue that some degree of reflection enables students to exercise an element of control over, and responsibility for, their own learning. It appears that self-assessment is an activity in which students, even those untutored in the necessary skills, routinely take part. A survey of 67 Key Stage 1 students suggested that even very young children used a range of information, including

feedback from adults and comparisons with friends' performance, to assess their own ability in using computers (Hayes 2000). Another study involving 1600 students studying for GCSE Science found that they

> *tended to judge their performance relative to their classmates rather than against external criteria and were strongly affected by their perceptions of teacher expectations.*
>
> (Daniels and Welford 1990)

Students tended to estimate high personal performance on tasks that they liked doing. Boys had a more inflated expectation of their performance than girls (ibid.). Another smaller-scale study suggested that more able students generally underestimate their levels of achievement, while average students tended to overestimate (Raynor 1995).

Students who are tutored in how to reflect on their learning will be able to come to some understanding about how they learn, about how well they are learning and about what they can do to improve their learning. Teachers can help in this process by talking to students about teaching and learning styles and strategies, by providing them with feedback on how well they are learning and by providing advice as well as a wide range of teaching strategies to enable them to improve:

> *Like any other skill, the skill of specifying and obtaining and using feedback needs practising.*
>
> (Baume and Baume 1986)

The invitation to students to explore their own learning through explaining their thinking and problem-solving strategies is seen as an important teaching strategy in developing student self-assessment at both Primary and Secondary levels (Dann 1996, Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum 1996, Parker-Rees 1997, Norwich 1998, Assessment Reform Group 1999, Doddington et al. 1999, Flutter et al. 1999). Teachers can undertake a series of strategies which can feed into this reflective process. They can provide students with their own diagnostic tools, for example concept maps, in order both to understand and assess their own learning (Campbell 2000). They can explain and justify to students the purposes of the various teaching devices they employ, for example homework (Warrington and Younger 1996) and collaborative group work (Hubbard 1997). They can give clear guidance to students on what it means to work hard (Rudduck 1995, Kershner 1996, Maden and Rudduck 1997, Maden and Johnson 1998). In one-to-one discussions on the progress students are making, and in class discussions, teachers can develop with students a language for thinking and talking about learning (Towler and Broadfoot 1992, Homerton-Schools Research Circle 1997). Such is the emphasis placed upon a similar dialogue taking place in Swedish schools that the Swedish National Curriculum requires teachers at the start of each lesson to discuss with students the aims of the lessons and also the strategies that should be used to achieve them (Beresford 1999a, Granstrom and Lander 1999). Other ways of engaging students in thinking about how they learn are outlined in Chapter 6.

As well as feedback and discussion about how they are learning, students clearly need feedback on how *well* they are learning. Black and Wiliam, in their extensive review of the field, define assessment as

> *all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.*
>
> (Black and Wiliam 1998b)

Such activities include the sharing of learning goals. Teachers who share the criteria of what constitutes good work, along the lines of those provided for Year 9 students involved in coursework (Rudduck 1996a), provide students with an important element for self-assessment, particularly of work where the criteria are externally prescribed (Maden and Rudduck 1997, Assessment Reform Group 1999). Facilitating peer assessment of work can lead to an informed dialogue between students about ways to improve (Gold 1998). Whilst still by no means a common practice, for example, in Primary schools (Newman 1997), some element of teacher negotiation with students over learning goals has been identified as a feature of effective teaching (Cooper and McIntyre 1995, Sammons et al. 1995). This negotiation of what constitutes success is seen as a vital component of what one writer has called the development of "learning acumen", the ability of a student to be, at one and the same time, self-critical and interested in self-improvement (Claxton 1995). Indeed, he claims that teachers specifying success criteria

can render [students] more, not less dependent on the clarification and correction of others

(Claxton, ibid.)

and that a student's 'nose' for quality "grows in the doing as in the reflecting" (ibid.). There are examples, mainly in the Higher Education sector and thus outside the prescriptions of the National Curriculum, of students themselves setting the criteria against which their work is judged (Baume and Baume 1986, Edwards 1989).

Teachers and students reflecting together on student performance data, again by no means commonplace (Smees and Thomas 1998), has also had powerful advocacy (Assessment Reform Group 1999). Target-setting has been proposed as one way of promoting a dialogue between teachers and students about student learning and performance (DFEE 1997b). In one school, which created its own 'mini-targets' system, "pupils began to take an interest in their own achievement. They checked their work more ..." (Perkins 1999). Target-setting "democratises achievement in the sense that it makes achievement possible for all and visible to all" (Fielding 1999a). It "may help schools to articulate clearly what is expected of ... each pupil, class or group or indeed of the school as a whole" (DFEE/OFSTED 1996:5).

Its association, however, with National Targets for Learning and its function of making schools more accountable have led to a concern that target-setting has less "personal or communal significance" (Fielding 1999b), and is less concerned with the development of the individual student than it is with a

school's performance when compared to that of others (Boyd and Jardine 1997). Such sentiments are reputedly beginning to be aired by students themselves (Fielding 1999b). There is also some debate whether target-setting can be an effective strategy for all schools. The suggestion that it can only be effective where a dialogue about teaching and learning already exists between teachers and students (Black and Wiliam 1998a, Hopkins 1999b) has been countered by the claim that target-setting will itself contribute to the development of such a culture (Lawley 1999).

An ongoing dialogue between teachers and students using a shared language of teaching and learning means a culture in which students are not afraid to ask for help (Black and Wiliam 1998a). Teachers in such a culture are often the only people with sufficient knowledge of a student's learning who can help the student overcome what have been called "the problems of pursuing reflective practice on ones own" (Day 2000). For students such problems include

> *the busyness* [sic] *of classrooms and schools, and ... school cultures which often discourage disclosure, feedback and collaboration.*
>
> (Day, ibid.)

The mundane and teacher-directed day often experienced by even the most talented of students, with little active contribution to talking about their learning, suggests that "the democratic goal of student centredness is pursued in a decidedly non-democratic manner" (Wallace and Wildy 1996).

In terms of developing students' self-assessment capacity, teachers need to teach the use of critical faculties:

> *If we are concerned to produce autonomous, critical and reflective learners, and to improve learning, we need to know what these pupils are making of what is offered to them, and how they view and feel about the circumstances in which it is being offered.*
>
> (Jeffrey and Woods 1997)

Some schools have developed formal processes by which the opinions of students, even quite young ones, can be fed back to teachers (Barsby 1991, Davies and Ellison 1995), or have adapted those devised by external consultants (Norwich 1998, Beresford 1999c). Some teachers inevitably find this challenging. It also challenges the primacy given by Government to *parental* monitoring of what goes on in schools (Crozier 1999). It is also time-consuming:

> *Helping children to think of themselves as confident learners is bound to take time and, when a legally prescribed curriculum has to be covered, taking this time demands a good deal of confidence.*
>
> (Parker-Rees 1997)

However, our experience in IQEA, and those in other school improvement projects, suggests that it is time well spent:

> *Thinking students ... are potentially the most powerful single source for rigorous quality assurance and continuous school improvement.*
>
> (MacBeath 1998)

Research into Student Self-assessment in IQEA Schools

Teachers in a number of IQEA Project schools have been interested in researching assessment in their schools. Assessment has sometimes been the central focus of the research undertaken on their behalf, but useful data relating to student reflection and self-assessment have often been incidental. The subjects for research which have provided such data are as follows:

- audits of the various forms of assessment experienced by their students, including target-setting
- audits of their students' learning skills
- the access students in the school have to advice on how they can improve
- the extent to which students reflect upon what they do in school
- the extent to which students are motivated by various reward systems
- to what extent students are involved in reporting their own progress
- an evaluation of a particular teaching model
- evaluation of teaching support
- student attitudes to work.

The various reports from which the data in the following sections are drawn are listed in Appendix 1 at the end of the book. The names of the school have been replaced by the case study number quoted in the text. All the research was undertaken between 1997 and 2000. The data have been organised under the following question headings:

1. Do students reflect upon the work they do?

2. Do students know how well they are doing in school?

   If so, how do they know?

3. Do students take the process of reflection and self-assessment with sufficient seriousness to be diligent, for example, in their self-reporting to parents?

4. Do students ask teachers how they can improve their work? If not, why don't they?

1. Do students reflect upon the work they do?

- 101 students in Years 7 to 9 in a comprehensive school in north Nottingham were asked if they thought about what they had done in particular lessons. 51% the students said they did, and a further 42% gave qualified answers, for example "only the good lessons". Only 7% said they never did. Reflection dropped off in Year 9, although students seemed more inclined in this year to criticise in their responses what they regarded as bad lessons (1).

- In follow-up interviews to a survey on students' views on teaching and learning in the school, a sample of 22 students from Years 7 to 9 in a north

Nottinghamshire comprehensive were asked if they reflected at the end of each school day on what they had learnt. Few students said they had learning on their mind when leaving school at the end of the day. Many, however, felt that they thought about what they were learning during lesson-time. Other occasions when they reflected included when they were doing homework, and when they were revising for tests and exams. Only one student mentioned teachers who sometimes recapitulated at the end of lessons. Parents invariably asked their children at the end of the day about what they had done at school, although students varied in their assessments of the quality of response they gave. Some grandparents also asked (2).

- Thirty boys and thirty girls from Years 8 and 9 in a Newark comprehensive school were asked *when* they thought about what they had learnt in lessons. 33% of the sample reflected on their day's work when doing homework. School-based reflection constituted only 18% of the responses, which suggested that students in Years 8 and 9 were given few opportunities for self- or other forms of evaluation by teachers. Given the leading nature of the question asked, 15% of the sample surprisingly denied they reflected at all (3).

- A comprehensive school in south Derbyshire decided to skill up its staff in the techniques of inductive teaching. Teachers of Year 10 students from each subject area were required to devise lessons using an inductive approach. This approach involved the presentation of data sets for students to categorise. Students learnt the necessary skills by taking part in a range

of lessons, and time was put aside in lessons to discuss the inductive process, as well as the categories derived. Students and teachers gradually (and together) became skilled in inductive reasoning. Eighteen students were interviewed as part of the evaluation of the introduction. It was clear that inductive teaching was well established in the school in the eyes of the students interviewed. It was generally well-liked, and even those who were not enthusiastic about it as a learning technique generally accepted that it was a useful addition to their learning armoury. All the students interviewed were able to articulate the inductive learning process. It had clearly had a motivating effect upon many students, and it had made them in most cases feel that they were better learners (4).

- 36 students in Years 7 and 8 in an inner-city Nottingham comprehensive school were asked if they were good at school work. The students were chosen to reflect the ability range in the school. Thirty-one of the 36 said they were good, and a further three said they were above average. All three were in the top sets. They were also asked how they learnt best - by themselves, in pairs, in groups or as part of a whole class. Boys in particular did not appear to like working by themselves. They clearly valued the social aspects of learning, and it was they who were critical of students who 'messed about' in paired and group activities. Surprisingly, whole class teaching seemed to be more popular than group work: this seemed partly to be explained by students equating group work with student misbehaviour. Teacher explanation was perceived to be better in

whole class teaching, which could apparently be supported by help from other students (7).

- A comprehensive school on the edge of Derby wanted students to evaluate the method of teaching used in the maths department. The method leaned heavily upon group discussion of tasks given to the students. 48 Year 7 and 18 Year 10 students were interviewed. Nearly nine out of ten Year 7 students, and about two out of three Year 10 students, enjoyed maths. Boys were slightly more enthusiastic in Year 7, girls in Year 10. Reasons for enjoying the subject focused more in Year 10 on the distinctive teaching approach used by the department than they did in Year 7. Although the relevant questions were framed slightly differently for the different year-groups, enthusiasm for the method of teaching seemed to wane slightly between Year 7 and Year 10. This appeared to be partly due to a perception on the part of Year 10 students that only certain methods were appropriate to the teaching of maths (9, 42).

- Sixty students, from Year 7 through to Year 13, from a north Hertfordshire comprehensive school were asked about the teaching methods employed in the religious studies department. Nearly all students recognised that they were taught differently in RS than in other subjects. Over half, concentrated almost entirely in Years 7 to 10, identified the discussion element in lessons as the main difference. Nine out of ten students preferred the method of teaching used in RS above other methods of delivery. Nearly half felt that it enhanced their learning (13).

- An all-girls' comprehensive in inner-city Nottingham was interested in what motivated their students to work hard. A questionnaire was issued to a selected sample of 197 girls, almost equally divided between those whom staff regarded as motivated and those regarded as demotivated. They were asked to identify the subjects at which they felt they did not do well, and to suggest reasons for this. 40% of both groups admitted to difficulties of understanding in certain subjects. Motivated students were more prepared to suggest reasons why they felt they were not good, and were more prepared than demotivated students to highlight personal shortcomings as a contributory reason for their difficulties (17).

Commentary

It appears that some students do reflect on what they have done at school, and that homework is often the catalyst for such reflection. Students in schools where teachers had overtly used and discussed with them various teaching models and strategies showed themselves able to articulate clearly about how they were taught, to evaluate the particular model or strategy and to discuss its appropriateness both for the subject under review and for other curriculum areas. Hand-in-hand with the understanding of how they were learning came often an enjoyment of a particular teaching approach, and a motivation to do well. Where students were less clear about how they learned, they were more inclined to highlight personal shortcomings for their lack of success, which could impact upon both their motivation and their self-esteem as learners.

2. ***Do students know how well they are doing at school?***

   If so, how do they know?

- In the north Nottingham comprehensive referred to above in case study 1, students relied primarily on the number of merits they received as an indication of how well they were doing in school. The high profile that the system seemed to enjoy in Year 9 suggested that students there still valued them, at least for their symbolic value. Students appeared to be tested regularly, and used the results to assess their performance and progress. Teachers' reports and verbal comments were also used. In Year 9 the posting of criteria relating to what had to be done to achieve good results was valued. The lack of elaborative written comments at the end of pieces of work in all but a few subjects was noted by a number of groups in Years 7 and 8 (1).

- Twelve Year 10 students at a south Derbyshire comprehensive were interviewed singly about their attitudes to work. They were chosen by staff in four groupings to reflect a range of ability and the perceived effort they put into their work. All twelve students felt that they worked hard most of the time. The poor ability / poor effort group seemed unaware that their effort levels were perceived by staff to be less than adequate, and were largely dependent upon their own views for arriving at their assessment of adequacy. Those whose work effort varied also relied more on their own assessments than upon those of their teachers. The high ability / good effort group apparently paid no heed to the qualitative assessment of teachers,

and preferred to rely upon their own judgement and their own assessment of quantitative data related to their performance. Only the poor ability / good effort group relied primarily upon teacher comments to assess their effort (5).

- 60 students from Years 7 to 11 at an all-boys' comprehensive school in north Hertfordshire were asked for their comments on the assessment system in their school. Student self-assessment was largely informal, although there was some peer assessment in at least one subject at GCSE. Students assessed their own performance in a variety of ways. Many had a view of what they perceived teachers to value in their work. In Years 7 to 9 the students emphasised the importance of presentation of work, good handwriting, good spelling, the ability to copy accurately and to write a lot. In Years 10 and 11 students mentioned the ability to show knowledge and understanding, to use technical and complex language and to evaluate sources, in other words an emphasis on content and structure. They also self-assessed by gauging the manner in which teachers addressed students. If teachers talked 'nicely' to individual students in and out of class then they felt they were working well. They compared current and past grades for their own work, and compared marks and grades with other students, particularly in Year 7. They also judged how well they were doing by the amount of public acclaim they received. Merits were an important public acknowledgement of success in Years 7 to 9. The ultimate acclaim was sitting on a chair at the end-of-term assembly (terminated now that all students were seated). In the same way, having work displayed in

classrooms and corridors was an important indicator for Year 7s. Some had an overview, in some subjects, either of the syllabus being followed, or of level indicators. This information was either provided by teachers in some subjects, or was derived by the students themselves through talking to friends in parallel classes or by looking ahead in the textbooks used. Some students, particularly older ones, had a sophisticated awareness of their learning strengths and weaknesses. A few felt that such information would be of use to their teachers, and that the present ways of communicating such information, for example the responses to the questions asked in the end-of-year report, were inadequate (11).

- A similar exercise was undertaken at a comprehensive school in east Essex. Eight groups of students from Years 7 to 9 were consulted on the school's assessment procedures. As in case study 11, students drew from a range of sources in order to assess how well they were doing. These included marks, although some students complained of lack of consistency amongst teachers; written reports, where it was felt that elaborative comments were made by teachers only if students had done really badly or really well; written comments at the end of work on how to improve; how the teacher talked to individuals; the commendation system, which seemed to fall into disrepute for students in Year 9, and how often students received punishments. Good work was equated with neat presentation, good spelling and the appropriate use of technical, subject-related vocabulary. Some subject teachers gave quality criteria to students (12).

- In order to assess the preparedness of their students for sixth-form study, a comprehensive school just outside north London organised interviews with 21 Year 12 students. They were asked, among other things, whether they were clear about the skills and abilities that were being assessed in individual subjects. Most felt they were aware. Students were routinely given copies of the various syllabuses, though they complained about their size and impenetrability. Some teachers outlined their courses verbally or in writing. For individual lessons some teachers contextualised the subject matter within the whole course (16).

Commentary

Students were dependent upon a range of sources in order to assess how well they were doing at school. Some of these sources were clearly flawed. Though students laid great emphasis, at least in the early years of Secondary school, on the rewards system, many were clearly aware that their school was more generous in bestowing merits to younger students for their motivational function than they were to students further up the school. Good marks appeared to be given for different things in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11 in at least one of the case study schools. The lengths of written comments at the end of pieces of work were seen as being in inverse proportion to the quality of the piece. How a teacher related to a particular student was also an important indicator for many, which suggests that some students were unable to distinguish between teacher attitudes brought about by behaviour and those brought about by work performance. Those who saw the number of

punishments inflicted upon them as an indicator of how well they were doing were manifestly unable to make the distinction.

While it is clear that some teachers facilitated student self-assessment to a degree by providing them with criteria relating to the quality of work expected, details of the syllabus and helpful comments on how they could improve their work, it is hardly surprising that, given the confusing myriad of sources, many students in the case study schools, and elsewhere, were not very good at self-assessment (Daniels and Welford 1990, Raynor 1995).

3. ***Do students take the process of reflection and self-assessment with sufficient seriousness to be diligent, for example, in their self-reporting to parents?***

- In case study 1, students were asked if they were involved in the reporting of their own progress. Nearly all groups mentioned Records of Achievement, and nearly all took their contributions to them seriously. The very few who did not felt that teachers did not take them seriously. A small number in Years 7 and 8, and slightly more in Year 9, mentioned their involvement in reporting on targets that they had negotiated with teachers. A large number of students in each year-group reported verbally to parents. Some only reported when asked, most only reported 'good things', and those who reported 'bad things' wanted to tell their version of events before the school communicated with parents (1).

- As part of an ongoing programme to introduce collaborative groupwork, a teacher of a Year 5 and Year 6 class in a Junior school in Merthyr asked students to brainstorm the principles of good group learning activity. The students came up with a short list which included listening to all members, taking turns and honouring the contribution of all group members. In the subsequent class discussion the list was further expanded. A student self- and peer-assessment schedule was drawn up where students were asked to assess themselves and those with whom they regularly worked in groups on twenty qualities. Students' individual self-assessments were then compared to the assessments by their peers. There was a .49 correlation between individual students' self-assessments and those of the members of their group of the qualities they lacked, and a remarkable correlation of .79 on the qualities they felt they possessed. This suggests that students either over-estimated the number of qualities they possessed, or that students' peers were less than candid in their appraisal of students' deficits (6).

- A comprehensive school in a village to the east of Nottingham decided to give students the opportunity to evaluate a series of co-operative groupwork lessons in the school (see Beresford 1999c). Two boys and two girls were randomly chosen from the various tutorial groups in Years 7 and 8. The chosen group, comprising some 50 pupils, were each given a card, with space to include the week's timetable and for individual judgements on the effectiveness, the enjoyment felt and the degree of personal involvement in each lesson. Judgements were in the form of scores for each category from 1 to 5, with 5 the best score. Pupils in each tutorial

were invited to discuss what each of these meant to them, and there was a plenary session where some common understanding was arrived at for each category. The importance of making judgements in each lesson was emphasised. The co-ordinator also stressed the importance and *gravitas* of the project. In the event, nearly all the participants returned cards. Grades given for personal involvement in lessons generally correlated closely to those given for effectiveness. What was more interesting was the range of scores given for personal enjoyment of a lesson. Just over 39% of lessons were scored identically for enjoyment and effectiveness in Year 7, and 38% in Year 8. There was a particularly high correlation in the higher-rated lessons. Year 7 pupils scored 33% of lessons as more effective than enjoyable, and 28% as more enjoyable than effective. Year 8 pupils scored 30% as more effective than enjoyable, and 32% as more enjoyable than effective. What these scores did indicate was that the students made a distinction between enjoyable and effective teaching, and that although they appreciated an element of fun in their education they also recognised that there were occasions when fun was inappropriate or not possible (14).

Commentary

The single case study we have on students reporting to parents suggests that students did take their contributions to Records of Achievement seriously, and that students' parents were inquisitive about their progress in school, although the quality of feedback which they received from their charges was variable. It

also suggests that this particular aspect of self-assessment may not be a high priority in schools. Where students were clear on the criteria for making judgements and assessments, they showed themselves to be serious-minded, though still inclined to inflate their own self-assessments, and possibly those of their peers.

4. *Do students ask teachers how they can improve their work? If not, why don't they?*

- In case study 1, students were asked if they ever talked to anyone about how they could improve their work. Parents were an important source of advice, particularly for students in Years 7 and 8. More students were inclined to consult their friends rather than their teachers about their work. However, when a formal system of teacher-student consultation was in place, like the school's mentoring scheme for the more able, this seemed to be valued by students (1).

- In case study 3, students were asked why they didn't ask teachers how they could improve their work. 23%, mostly in Year 9, said they had no need to. 22%, all in Year 8, feared a negative reaction from teachers. 13%, mostly girls, said they would be embarrassed in front of their friends (3).

- Twenty-four students (with special educational needs) at a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive were interviewed singly in order to

evaluate the support provision they received. The sample interviewed included students with a range of learning difficulties. A number were dyslexic, a smaller number had problems related to number, another had difficulties relating to learning modern languages, and there was one partially-sighted student who received back-up secretarial support. 21 of the 24 students were confident enough to ask teachers for help if a support teacher was not present. Some volunteered that teachers seemed aware of their needs and routinely offered help on how to improve their work. A number did admit that they did sometimes ask teachers in private at the end of lessons for advice on how to improve their work. A smaller number asked in lessons when they were stuck. Embarrassment and shyness were cited as reasons for not asking. It was suggested that embarrassment was caused by either asking in front of friends, or by admitting to having done poor work. Another reason for not asking for advice was that it might lead to more work (8).

- An upper school near Luton wanted to undertake a Learning Skills audit amongst its 171 Year 12 students, in order to reorganise library resources to meet students' study needs. Students were asked by anonymous questionnaire to assess their own skills in time management, revision, researching for information, essay writing and note-taking. They were then asked if they would welcome further instruction in any of the techniques. Those saying they wanted extra help varied from 30% for note-taking to 70% for revision (10).

- In case study 11, all students were prepared to ask teachers how to improve their work. In particular, students studying for GCSEs often questioned teachers where there was a discrepancy between their own assessment and the teacher's assessment of a particular piece of work (11).

- In case study 12, verbal feedback from teachers, particularly in the form of one-to-one comments, was generally appreciated, and students wanted more of it, particularly in private at the end of lessons. Year 7s seemed prepared to ask for help to improve, but those of average or below average ability in Year 9 were called 'bodniks' if they asked (12).

- The whole of Year 7 and Year 8, some 585 students, in a south-east Essex comprehensive were asked if they felt they could ask a teacher for help if they did not understand something. 69% of Year 7 students answered 'often' or 'always', 30% answering 'rarely' or 'sometimes'. For Year 8 the comparative figures were 60% and 38%. Year 7 girls were rather more inclined to ask for help than Year 7 boys, but the difference had largely disappeared in Year 8 (15).

Commentary

Students were prepared to ask for help from teachers on how to improve their work where there was a culture of asking, for example in GCSE classes or where special needs students were present, where schools had set up a formal

system of student mentoring or where students could approach teachers in private, and where requests for group help could be lodged anonymously.

Students gave personal shyness, fear of adverse teacher reaction and embarrassment in front of friends (including the implication that their work was bad or that they were deficient in some way) as reasons for not seeking such help. The culture discouraging reflection described above by Day (Day 2000) is one which can be imposed by students as well as teachers, and seems to be more common in Secondary schools after Year 7.

Summary

From the survey of the literature,

- students appear to take part in self-assessment, both formally and informally;
- students are not particularly good at self-assessment;
- teachers can help students self-assess by talking with them about learning, providing them with diagnostic tools, negotiating learning goals and targets and discussing with them performance data;
- a classroom culture where students are not afraid to ask for help is an important element in developing student self-assessment.

From the review of research on student self-assessment

- some students do reflect on school work, particularly when doing homework;
- where teachers talk with students about teaching and learning, students are articulate about learning processes and their appropriateness, and appear to enjoy learning;
- informal student self-assessment is flawed because many of the sources used, like rewards systems, throw out confusing messages;
- where teachers provide performance criteria, work specifications and expectations and comment on how students can improve their work, student self-assessment appears to be better;
- where self-reporting is a high priority in a school, and where students are equipped to self-assess, the task is taken seriously;
- high student self-esteem in the eyes of the teacher and student peers is an important element in creating a classroom culture where teachers can be asked for help.

From both students appear to learn more effectively when

- they reflect upon what they have learnt
- they know how well they are doing at school
- they take seriously what and how they learn
- they ask teachers how they can improve their work.

CHAPTER 4

Independent Learning

> *If our pupils learn everything under duress and compulsion, they may in the end be very knowledgeable but they will never be educated.*
>
> (Kaminski 1999, quoting Kelly 1974)

The last chapter argued that reflective students, like reflective teachers, were able, when equipped to know how well they were learning, to exercise some control over their work with regard to how they did it, at what pace they did it and knowing what help they were likely to need. The premise of this chapter is that the ability of students to learn independently is an equally important factor in their development as learners. Where the planning of teaching has been identified as a key classroom condition for improving teaching and learning in schools, this chapter argues that the ability of students to organise their own learning is a complementary skill which needs to be addressed by teachers.

Within the IQEA Project planning for the classroom has in part been defined as teachers developing

> *a range of lesson formats that become their repertoire and from which they create arrangements that they judge to be appropriate to a particular purpose.*
>
> (Hopkins et al. 1997a: 47)

This definition highlights the ability of the effective teacher to respond to the unexpected in lessons, the

> *unforeseen minor events that have to be addressed.*
>
> (Ibid.)

Such a definition, slightly modified, provides some justification for developing independent learning skills in students. It recognises that a great deal of student learning can take place outside the classroom. In a world where the classroom teacher has become one of a burgeoning number of knowledge sources, students need to develop a battery of independent learning and problem-solving skills and techniques of their own in order to process and learn from the wide information base now available. They need to develop and refine their own learning strategies so that they can benefit fully from the variety of learning situations which they meet as students and subsequently, in their working lives.

As with the development of students' self-assessment capacities, the teacher's role in providing coaching and practice in independent learning skills is critical. In so doing they are effectively working towards their own redundancy, because independent learning means learning without the help of teachers. Along with the ability to self-assess, independent learning helps to develop the student as an autonomous learner.

The Literature of Independent Learning

A number of writers have addressed the theme of developing independent learning in students as a desirable and increasingly necessary outcome of formal education. Those reviewing the curricular requirements of a society in the midst of a micro-electronic revolution in communications and information

technology suggest that the working population will need to learn and re-learn new skills as a matter of routine during their working lives (Wragg 1997). The ability to learn independently is "one of the most oft-cited goals of schooling" (Levin 1995), one which schools need to address by giving students

> *tasks or projects which require some sustained effort over time, and then give them the ability and the scope to organise themselves to pursue these projects.*
>
> (Ibid.)

Levin's comments on the curriculum in Canada are repeated by those reviewing learning in Scotland:

> *If taking responsibility for themselves and their own learning ... is seen as an important quality for young people to develop, then involving learners in the planning and management of their own learning ... will be important.*
>
> (Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum: 1996:12)

It is also argued that the learning autonomy provided through independent learning gives concrete recognition to the individuality of learners (Kaminski 1999), and symbolises, on the part of teachers,

> *respect for the child's ability to grapple with intellectual problems*
>
> (Gracie 1981).

There is considerable evidence that students value this learning autonomy. They are enthusiastic about practical work (Osborne and Collins 1999), lab-

work (Gonzalez and Gonzalez 1980) and groupwork (Hazelwood et al. 1988, MORI/Campaign for Learning 1998). Undertaking projects in Secondary schools gives meaning and a sense of ownership to participating students (Wallace 1996a, Rudduck 1996b). Yet the suggestion is that schools generally fail to reflect in their teaching and learning practices the responsibility and autonomy that students already experience outside of school (Rudduck 1998), that

> *Secondary students, supposedly on the verge of being independent learners, are typically prohibited from doing anything without explicit permission.*
>
> (Levin 1995)

This suggests that in most schools considerations relating to the maintenance of discipline outweigh those relating to the development of student learning autonomy.

The development of independent learning has also been justified on economic grounds. Local authorities, confronted with a series of unviable sixth-form teaching groups, have been forced to create mixed-ability classes in which whole-class teaching has been inappropriate (Gonzalez and Gilbert 1979). Small schools have been forced to create mixed-ability classes in order to maintain a range of subject options, and have chosen to develop the independent learning skills of the students in these classes (Kaminski 1999). In Early Years classes, teachers have developed such skills in very young children in order to make best use of learning time and to free themselves to

address the needs of individual students and groups (Phillips 1993). It has been suggested, however, that the extra funds needed for schools to accommodate resource-based learning has made the development of independent learning vulnerable to cutbacks in educational spending (Gibbs 1989). The cost-effective use of teacher time, particularly in the Primary sector, has been one of the main justifications used by advocates of more whole-class teaching (Alexander et al. 1992).

One of the roles of teachers in developing learning autonomy is to build upon their students' "craft knowledge" (Hubbard 1997), with which they

> *make sense of their learning situation and actively construct and develop their own learning strategies.*
>
> (Ibid.)

There may be some student resistance: there is some suggestion, for example, that students unfamiliar with independent learning do not necessarily accept that better thinking skills mean better work performance, partly because

> *they have very conservative views about the range of acceptable teacher behaviours and classroom activities.*
>
> (Cunliffe 1995)

Teachers therefore also need to justify the coaching of study skills, of thinking skills, or the use of specific teaching and learning models to develop both of these. The main justification, and the ultimate aim of teacher help in developing independent learning, is to

bring within the reach of students types of conceptual control and modes of inquiry that are impossible to generate through many of the most common methods of teaching, such as 'recitation' or 'chalk and talk'.

(Joyce et al. 1997)

After this initial advocacy, teachers need to instruct and organise practice for students in these skills, as well as monitor the rate at which these skills develop. The observation of a student undertaking an independent learning task can

provide the teacher with clues as to which teaching strategy meets his needs, be it close instruction, tentative suggestion or even silence.

(Rowland 1981)

Similar clues can be provided through 'learning logs', in which students unselfconsciously commit to paper any questions they have about what they are learning independently (D'Arcy 1981). Teachers can 'fine tune' the rate of development, without necessarily compromising the principle of independent learning:

It is important to avoid taking over a student's work ... but equally important that a student should not be held back for want of a hint or suggestion that you could quickly give.

(Smith 1981)

There are examples of students collaborating with teacher-librarians to draw up templates of study skills, for example on how to take notes from videos (Wilson 1991).

The knowledge derived of students' learning styles enables teachers to plan interventions that are appropriate to students' learning needs (Fielding 1994, Cooper and McIntyre 1995). It enables teachers, for example, to set appropriate homework tasks in order that students can practice and apply problem-solving skills learnt in the classroom (OFSTED 1995a, Weston 1999). An example of one of the critical skills needed to develop students' learning autonomy is the ability to work effectively in groups. The skill is important because

> *interaction among children around appropriate tasks increases their mastery of critical concepts.*
>
> (Slavin 1993)

At the most basic level this needs to be an explanation of, and teacher justification for using, group work as a learning activity (Weltner 1977). One example of a highly structured coaching programme to develop groupwork skills

> *provides daily opportunities for students to work collaboratively to solve simulated and real life problems using the skills and information they are learning in class.*
>
> (Dolan and Berryman 1994)

In moving their students towards learning autonomy, teachers need to re-define their classroom role. They need to become "relaxed consultants" rather than "charismatic animators" (Bowyer 1981), in other words the emphasis in teachers' classroom activity needs to shift from whole-class presentation to facilitating individual learning (Gibbs 1989). Observations of independent learning lessons have shown teachers to be initially unnerved in what was for them a new situation:

> *Teachers were anxious to be in direct contact with what the students were doing, as they no longer had any direct control over the source and dissemination of knowledge.*
>
> (Gonzalez and Gilbert 1979)

Teachers are also disorientated when

> *presented with answers they have not generated.*
>
> (Gibbs 1989)

This need for an adjustment of attitude towards students' learning is reiterated by those advocating the development of thinking skills:

> *Classrooms need to have open-minded attitudes about the nature of knowledge and thinking and be able to create an educational atmosphere where talking about thinking ... is not only tolerated but actively pursued.*
>
> (McGuinness 1999: 6)

What is being proposed here is a dramatic shift in classroom culture, one where the teacher no longer pre-selects resources in order that students achieve the 'right' answer, but where students have uninhibited access to a range of resources; where students not only find out answers for themselves, but are also often involved in formulating the questions; where teachers provide students with the necessary skills to make the teachers themselves ultimately redundant; where classrooms become work stations connected up to a central library resource.

Research into Independent Learning in IQEA Schools

The focus within the IQEA Project of improving teaching and learning through the development of teachers' repertoire has naturally spawned an interest in schools in adapting teaching models and evolving teaching strategies to help achieve this end. A few schools have commissioned specific research on independent learning in the curriculum, but as in the last chapter it has been necessary to derive data from more general research into other aspects of teaching and learning. The areas of focus for the relevant research projects have been

- attitudinal studies about independent learning
- follow-up interviews after attitudinal surveys on teaching and learning
- audits of opportunities for independent learning within schools, in homework and across a range of schools
- evaluations of independent learning strategies in specific subjects

- audits of students' independent learning skills.

As in the previous chapter, the various reports from which the data in the following sections are drawn are listed in Appendix 1 at the end of the book. The names of the school have been replaced by the case study number quoted in the text. All the research was undertaken between 1997 and 2000. The data have been organised under the following question headings:

1. Do students have uninhibited access to the resources necessary for independent learning?

2. To what extent do students do problem-solving activities in lessons?

3. How much groupwork do students undertake in lessons?

   What is the nature and quality of that groupwork?

4. To what extent do students undertake research by themselves?

   Where do they do it, and what resources do they use?

1. Do students have uninhibited access to the resources necessary for independent learning?

- A comprehensive school on the northern outskirts of Nottingham wanted to undertake an audit of independent learning opportunities offered by the school. A mixed ability and mixed gender sample of 101 students from Years 7 to 9 were interviewed. Students were asked if they were ever allowed to undertake research on their own initiative in school. About one-fifth of the sample said they were in humanities subjects. Independent research activity generally took place when teachers sent students to the library to find information, or when students were asked to collect data and make observations on the school premises. There seemed to be some occasions when students went into the local village to undertake research, although it was not clear whether they were accompanied or not. Outside of school, CD-Roms were the most-used resources for homework involving research. Nearly all of the 77% of students who owned them used them. Only about two-thirds of the 59% who had access to the internet used it as a research resource. Less than half of the students in Year 8 who had access used it. A fifth of students relied on their own libraries to access information, and about the same proportion used their parents. Only about one in 10 students used school books (1).

- A north Nottinghamshire comprehensive administered an attitudinal survey to its students in Years 7 to 9, and commissioned interviews with a representative sample of 22 students to address some of the issues which

had emerged from the survey. The students were asked about how often they undertook independent research in school. Research techniques were used in a narrow range of subjects - humanities, science and art were mentioned. Year 7 students reported that they had a weekly lesson on library skills. All students used the school library, their local library or books at home to do research. A large number of those interviewed had access to, and used, encyclopaedia computer software. A couple had started surfing the internet (2).

- A school in south-east Essex was concerned about the dip in performance of its Year 8 students. A questionnaire was devised where the students were asked to respond to various statements about the school. 585 students in Years 7 and 8 gave responses. Included in the statements were ones relating to the extent students felt they learned from a range of routine classroom teaching and learning strategies. Using a four-point range (rarely/sometimes/often/always), students scored comparatively highly (% often and always) in autonomous learning situations (reading from books 62%, discussion 61%, researching information 59%, using ICT 56%) and in semi-autonomous ones, where they were dependent upon teachers for the provision of materials (watching videos 62%, filling in worksheets 58%). Students scored teacher-centred activities lower (listening to teacher talk 51%, copying from the board 39%, listening to tapes 28%) (15).

- A comprehensive school on the Nottingham ring road wanted to encourage its students to take more responsibility for their own learning,

and to this end commissioned interviews with 45 students representing the ability range in Years 7 to 11 in order to audit the degree of independent learning which already took place in the school. Generally speaking most students claimed to know where books and equipment were in the classrooms. There seemed to be problems of accessibility, however, below Year 10. Groups of girls in Years 7 and 8 claimed not to know where things were "because the teacher always gets it for us". Groups of boys in Years 8 and 9 said that equipment and books were mainly given out by the teacher. One boy in Year 8 went as far as to suggest that the teaching performance of supply teachers was greatly hampered by the class teacher having taken away the key to the stock cupboard (18).

Commentary

Students described a range of independent learning activities - researching from books, discussions, using ICT - and they were given varying degrees of opportunity to take part in them. Some students described opportunities outside the classroom - visits to the school library and other areas on the school site. Students generally preferred these learning opportunities to those which were more teacher-centred. Inevitably, because of the demands of a prescribed curriculum and public examinations, much of the research they did had a strong element of teacher direction, with teachers setting the research questions and either distributing resources or directing students to the various sources of information inside and outside the classroom. This has been described as "semi-independent learning" (Kaminski 1999).

This is not to suggest that teachers should ignore developing the skills necessary for their students' independent learning. Semi-independent learning can provide practice in many of these skills. The best practice saw schools providing coaching in the skills necessary for independent learning, for example the use of libraries. The increasing access of students to the internet, particularly for homework that requires an element of research, would suggest that students require some coaching in its use.

2. To what extent do students do problem-solving activities in lessons?

- Students in case study 1 school were also asked if they were ever given problem-solving activities in lessons. Every group interviewed identified investigations in maths as a problem-solving activity which they did regularly. In PSE students were often given case studies, where they were asked how they would deal with the issues raised by them. Investigations in science took place mainly in Years 8 and 9, presumably when teachers felt that students had sufficient basic knowledge to undertake them (1).

- Students in case study school 2 were asked how regularly problem-solving occurred in lessons. Problem-solving took place in maths on a regular basis - at least every other lesson. It was rarely used elsewhere as a learning technique. Some work was cited in languages, and drama used the technique in Year 9 (2).

- Year 7 and Year 8 students in case study school 15 were asked, from a range of four options, which kind of homework they preferred. 68% of students replied 'often' or 'always' to 'finishing off classwork', 45% to 'research', 40% to '(rote) learning' and 30% to 'problem solving' (15).

- Students in case study school 18 were asked what sort of problems they were asked to solve in lessons. Students were able to identify very quickly the use of problem-solving in maths, but were less able to identify its use in other curriculum areas without some prompting. The use of case studies was highlighted in Years 7, 8 and 11; simulations in drama in Years 7, 8 and 10, and investigations in Years 9 and 10. One group of Year 9 boys described an interesting form period where what they termed 'Agony Aunt problems' were discussed (18).

Commentary

The opportunity to apply existing knowledge to new situations is an important element in the development of students' ability to learn independently. Only maths teachers in the case study schools consistently provided such opportunities, although instances were cited in science, personal and social education and drama. It may be that teachers of subjects other than maths feel that their students have an insufficient knowledge base to attempt problem-solving effectively. The often protracted nature of problem-solving activities mitigates against teachers, under pressure to complete schemes of work,

allocating time to them. Perhaps due to their lack of practice, the students in one of the case study schools showed little appetite for problem-solving homeworks.

3. *How much groupwork do students undertake in lessons?*

What is the nature and quality of that groupwork?

- Students in case study 1 school were asked about the incidence of group work in their school, and whether they achieved a lot of work in groupwork activities. There seemed to be a widespread use of groupwork in the school, and just under a half of those questioned claimed to achieve a lot in group activities. A considerable proportion of students, however, were not convinced that it was an effective way of working. When asked the supplementary question "Why don't you get a lot done in groupwork?" a number admitted to talking and messing about. They also claimed to argue a lot, particularly when the teacher had chosen the group. A few felt they were slowed down when working in a group, and they preferred to work alone. For some, their work performance depended upon who was in the group. Those who felt they got a lot of work done said that there were more ideas circulating in a group, and that their friends helped them when they got into difficulties. Most of those favouring groupwork preferred to choose their own group, although a sizeable minority preferred the teacher to choose the group (1).

- Case study school 2 students were also asked about the frequency of groupwork in lessons. It appears to have been used frequently. Year 9 students reckoned that they experienced groupwork on a daily basis. Year 7 students said that it was used in every lesson in one subject, though only when they were well-behaved. Year 8 students quoted a range of subjects where the technique was used (2).

- A Newark comprehensive school was keen to pursue with students in Years 8 and 9 issues raised in an attitudinal survey about the school. A representative sample of 60 students was interviewed. One of the questions asked was what kind of teaching they enjoyed. 55% claimed to enjoy group work, and 38% liked paired work. Girls were rather more enthusiastic than boys about both (3).

- A Nottingham comprehensive school wished to establish what students experienced and preferred in terms of the teaching offered at the school in Years 7 and 8. 36 students were interviewed in single-sex groups of three. They were asked about the incidence of group and paired work in the school. Generally, little seemed to take place: the group work which did take place seemed to provoke negative comments about student disruption of activities, yet students also had some perception of the advantages which effective groupwork could provide. The suggestion was that the group work which did take place was not effective (7).

- The religious studies department in a north Hertfordshire all-boys' comprehensive wanted to evaluate the approach to the subject that they had been piloting for nearly a year. This approach consisted of a high level of discussion, with as little teacher intervention in debates as possible. A representative sample of 60 students in Years 7 to 13 was interviewed. 97% said unreservedly that they enjoyed the subject, and over two-thirds identified the teaching approach as the reason for their enjoyment. All but one student recognised that the approach was different from that in other subjects, and 92% preferred it as a teaching method, with 45% claiming to learn more and better with it (13).

- At case study school 18, students were asked about the incidence and quality of groupwork in the school. There seemed to be a great deal of groupwork taking place across the curriculum in all years. The response of students, however, suggested that not all of it was effective. Students in every year-group pointed to the temptations of socialising too much in groupwork - one student in Year 11 claimed to work better in groups with acquaintances rather than friends. Those in Years 9, 10 and 11 who preferred working in groups showed a sophisticated awareness of the benefits of group interaction in learning - sharing of expertise, coming to a shared understanding, the better working atmosphere created with those whose methods of working were well-known to group members. This awareness was not sufficiently widespread, particularly in Years 7 and 8, to suggest that students understood fully the techniques required to work effectively in a group (18).

- The science department of a comprehensive school in Dunstable operated two systems of choosing group members for science group activities in Year 9. In one class the teacher chose the groupings, in the other the students chose. Staff wanted to canvass students' views on which system helped them more with their learning. A questionnaire was issued to a cross-section of 18 students, which invited them to rate a series of 12 statements relating to their groupwork in science. Boys rated groupwork as a learning strategy more highly than girls, and were prepared to accept a higher level of teacher direction than girls. Group self-selection was the most important element of group work for girls, and they felt that it gave them a strong element of control over how they learnt. Boys' ratings according to who chose the groupings did not vary quite so dramatically as those of the girls (19).

- A group of five Merthyr schools in the Primary sector requested an audit of the quality of co-operative groupwork taking place within their schools. Using a grid devised from criteria of effective groupwork (Joyce et al. 1997: 185-188), observations were made of 21 lessons which contained a strong element of groupwork. Work groups were all chosen by the teachers. Within that choice students were often free to choose which partner to work with. Groups often had over five students in them, and were usually of mixed genders. Teachers were generally proficient in expressing the aim and purpose of tasks. There was usually some interaction in the groups, though often only between students in adjoining

seats. The interaction took place informally, and there did not seem to be any set procedures. The teacher either circulated between groups, or stayed with a group needing specialist advice. Students seemed motivated in groupwork, and exercised a sense of fairness in their dealings with their peers (20).

- A Cambridge comprehensive school wished to elicit student views on what constituted effective groupwork, and where it took place in the school. For the purpose of the interviews groupwork was defined as "work undertaken by three or more students on a shared task". To this end two groups of 3-4 students from each of Years 7, 8 and 9 were interviewed. It was clear from the responses that a lot of groupwork took place. Groups varied in size between 3 and 7 students. Students' estimates of the percentage of the school week taken up in groupwork ranged from 30% in Year 7 to 65% in Year 9. All the groups responded with "lots" or "often". Humanities and music were mentioned by all eight groups as having groupwork. Seven groups quoted English and science. PE was mentioned by all but the Year 7 groups. Less frequent were references to German, drama and art. The prevailing method of choosing groups was to use seating arrangements in the classroom. This means that groups stayed at their tables with their friends. Less often the teachers selected the groups. This appeared to be common in PE, where the teachers used a numbering system to allocate groups. One group felt that the mood of any particular teacher dictated whether he or she chose the groups. One Year 9 group felt that students were allowed to select groups for "unimportant stuff", which

was defined as art, music and DT. While some individuals conceded that there were times when they worked better in groups chosen by the teacher, almost all the students interviewed felt that working with their friends was the most effective method of organisation. A number of groups talked about the "comfort" offered by such an arrangement. It meant that there was a feeling of mutual trust within the group. Members knew each other's work preferences and strengths, so there were no arguments over the allocation of tasks. There was no shyness about asking friends to do something. Because group members mixed socially outside the classroom, there was less need to talk about matters that were irrelevant to the task in hand. A sense of fun pervaded the group activity, and they felt that the quality of work produced was better than that from some artificially-created group. Enthusiasm for groupwork varied within groups as well as between groups. It was suggested that certain subjects lent themselves to groupwork: one Year 8 group quoted maths and drama, and several groups suggested that groupwork was better for them in subjects in which they were interested. Those who enjoyed groupwork liked the element of discussion. One Year 8 student said it was "more interesting than sitting in silence copying from a book". A group discussion enabled more ideas to be aired, and allowed students to feed in their specialisms. Work could be produced more quickly by a group than by an individual working alone. A number of students made the point that the quality of the work produced by the group depended upon the quality of the group membership. The best work was done when all the group members contributed, and when the teacher was available for consultation (21).

- The general studies department of an all-boys' comprehensive in north Hertfordshire wanted to undertake an evaluation of the curriculum offered to Years 10 and 11. To this end it was decided to canvass the views of students in these two years. 217 questionnaires were returned. Two of the questions asked students whether they liked whole-class teaching and small group activities. While both year-groups did not mind whole-class teaching, they showed a stronger preference for group activities (22).

Commentary

The incidence of groupwork in schools seemed to be greater than the incidence of problem-solving, and it is a strategy that was apparently used across the curriculum. It was a learning activity which students enjoyed: they liked the comfortable ambience of working in a group, the variety of ideas which circulated in group discussion, the speed of producing work that effective groupwork could achieve, and the quality of that work. Groupwork appeared to be most effective where students were proficient in groupwork techniques, through custom and practice (in the case study schools) or by teachers coaching students in such techniques (Joyce et al. 1997).

Groupwork appeared to be ineffective when students did not interact, or when they argued with each other or 'messed around'. This might have been through lack of practice - that students did an insufficient amount of groupwork to become conversant with ways of working effectively in groups.

It might have been that the opportunity to move away from a predominantly teacher-centric mode of learning provided too great a temptation to socialise, hence the identification of groupwork by both teachers and students in some of the schools with 'bad' behaviour. Who chose the groupings seemed to be a particular issue in some schools. Students felt that the quality of work done often reflected the composition of the group. Good work was done in groups where everyone got on with each other. In the Primary case study schools the teachers chose the groups. In the Secondary schools there seemed to be an equal split between teachers and students choosing. Girls appeared to care more about this issue than boys. It did not appear to be an issue in the school where groupwork was commonplace, where either method was tolerated. This would suggest that, in establishing custom and practice in their classrooms, teachers should employ both systems.

4. ***To what extent do students undertake research by themselves? Where do they do it, and what resources do they use?***

- Students in case study 3 school were asked whether they were asked to do book-based research. 37% claimed to do some in humanities subjects, but little elsewhere. The same percentage used the local library, and a quarter of the sample used PC encyclopaedias. None of the Year 9 students interviewed said they used the school library (3).

- An upper school near Luton wished to undertake an audit of learning skills among its Year 12 students. A total of 171 students returned completed questionnaires. 79% claimed to use the school library at least once a week. 84% of the sample consulted books when they visited, 33% used CD-Roms and 28% used the internet. 78% felt they were better than average at researching for information, and 76% at reading to extract information. This expertise had been derived from use of the library further down the school (27%) and from coaching in library and research techniques in specific lessons, particularly English (36%) (10).

- A representative sample of 21 Year 12 students at a comprehensive school just north of London were asked if they felt their experiences lower down the school had prepared them sufficiently for work in the sixth form. One of the interview questions asked was what they understood by 'background reading', and whether they felt proficient at it. Most students felt they were able to undertake background reading. Some had received formal coaching in note-taking techniques, and one subject teacher had distributed a methods booklet. There was some width in the interpretation of what constituted background reading. For some students it involved a strong element of direction by the teacher in terms of which books, and often which pages, should be read. One student who received little direction would have preferred more. At least one subject teacher distributed notes to be read outside of the lesson. In other subjects the reading expected was less directed, and constituted 'reading around'

subjects. The internet was mentioned by a few students as a useful resource for this purpose. (16).

- In case study school 18, students were asked whether they were ever asked to look for information on their own initiative, and, if so, where they looked. Teachers asked students to undertake research across a wide range of subjects in Year 7. This range appeared to narrow somewhat in Year 8, but was restored with the advent of options in Year 9 and the GCSE coursework syllabus in Years 10 and 11. The school library and books at home were used by equal numbers, with the local library also being popular. There seemed to be a substantial number of students who were linked at home to the internet, but only a handful used it for research purposes (18).

- An all-boys' comprehensive in north Hertfordshire embarked in November 1999 on a project sponsored by a major communications organisation which linked the households of all Year 8 students with the internet. Students without such access were loaned laptops if necessary, along with free provision of the link. The intention was that staff would create homework and subject web pages which students would access in their homes. Staff would also be generally available to provide assistance by e-mail. As part of the evaluation of the project the school wanted to record the initial views of students on the project. These views were canvassed by questionnaire. 138 students filled out the questionnaire during a tutorial period. The responses indicated that 91% of those

questioned had a computer at home, 65% already had access to the internet and 53% used the internet for school work. 40% said they felt proficient in its use. In the interim evaluation exercise a representative sample of 30 students was interviewed. The most common use of the link was the setting of research tasks which directed students to specific web sites or, in a minority of instances, which required students to surf the internet. Other uses included the posting of information, of learning objectives, of model essay answers, and the provision of self-correcting tests and quizzes. A few students had found tasks technically difficult at the start of the project, but they quickly mastered the necessary skills. Most students found the link homework easier than more traditional forms. They found more information through their access to the internet, and they found the posted explanation of tasks easier to understand than the inevitably compressed notes which they made in their homework planners on non-link homework requirements. The link meant that they could ask friends for help by e-mail. One group felt that, because link homework was more fun, they felt more motivated. Students generally felt that the Link Project had improved their learning. In particular, it had developed their skills in IT, research and presentation (23, 24).

Commentary

Homework requiring research appeared to be the most common opportunity offered to students to learn independently, or semi-independently, of teachers. Students used school libraries, local libraries and home-based resources,

including CD-Roms, PC encyclopaedias, the internet, books and parents to undertake research. In some of the schools students were coached in library skills, note-taking techniques and in background reading.

Much of students' current use of the internet embraced the essence of independent learning, inasmuch as it comprised a research activity where the only teacher direction was the setting of the research task. The growing number of households with access to the internet suggests that teachers should contribute to the process of honing this particular skill. Where teachers directed students to the internet for research activities, they could model the use of web pages as learning resources by asking research questions related to specific websites. Where schools were able to create an intra-net between school and students' homes, students could be encouraged to communicate with each other to discuss homework tasks.

Summary

From the literature review, it appears that

- learning independently is a key life-skill;
- teachers generally provide some independent learning opportunities in class, sometimes because of reasons related to the organisation and ability range of the class involved;
- students generally enjoy independent learning activities;
- where they are not enjoyed, students regard such activities as disruptive or ineffective in enhancing learning;

- teachers need to advocate and justify the use of independent learning in their classrooms, to train students and organise practice in relevant skills, to monitor student progress in those skills and to re-define their own classroom role.

From the review of the research in the case study schools, it appears that

- opportunities for 'semi-independent' learning, with tasks and resources to be used nominated by the teacher, are offered in most schools;
- students prefer these activities to more teacher-centred learning;
- some coaching in relevant skills takes place;
- problem-solving activities are restricted almost exclusively to maths;
- groupwork is quite common across the curriculum, and is enjoyed by students, many of whom find it an effective way of learning;
- who chooses the groups is a key issue for many students;
- homework often provides opportunities for independent research, with increasing use being made of the internet.

From both it appears that students learn most effectively when

- they have ready access to the books and equipment they need for lessons
- they do problem-solving in lessons
- they learn in groups as well as by working alone
- they undertake independent research.

CHAPTER 5

Affinity to Teachers

If teachers aren't fair to us, why should we be fair to the others?

(Student quoted in West and Beresford 1998)

The centrality of teacher-student interactions in effective teaching and learning is well established. Within IQEA we have highlighted the importance of 'authentic relationships' as a major determinant of student progress, where teachers establish the classroom

> *as a safe and secure learning environment in which pupils can expect acceptance, respect and even warmth from their teachers, without having to earn these - they are intrinsic rights which are extended to pupils because they are there.*
>
> (Hopkins et al. 1997: 14)

Where this support is present in the classroom, teachers can reasonably make work demands of their students. Hence the notion of an authentic relationship is contractual, inasmuch as it implies that students, in return for certain teacher behaviours, will willingly undertake certain learning behaviours required by those teachers. What is being suggested here is that the creation of a warm and secure learning environment, which is predominantly the product of a close teacher-student relationship, is one of the conditions necessary to enhance student learning. Others have identified the creation of such an environment as a key teaching skill (Wang et al. 1993, Kyriacou 1998, Morgan and Morris 1999). For students the memory of such a relationship can last well beyond the period of compulsory schooling: BEd candidates have been able to recall

quite precise details relating to some of their teachers in Primary schools (Hayes 1993).

The personality of the teacher is clearly a critical factor in the creation and maintenance of this 'safe and secure' environment. Some writers have suggested, however, that certain teacher behaviours which can contribute to such an environment can be learnt. Marzano, in a handbook which has been adopted by one Canadian province as a teacher primer, suggests that such strategies as acknowledging students outside the classroom, asking them about their home lives and calling them by their first names will enhance their engagement (Marzano et al. 1992). What is more problematical is identifying student behaviours which can initiate and maintain a reciprocal relationship with their teachers. It has been suggested that, while teacher empathy for students is not only possible but to be encouraged, student empathy for teachers is impossible (Hendley 1978). Firstly, where all teachers have had experience of being students, few students have had experience of being teachers. Secondly, the nature of the teacher-student relationship invariably means that teachers dictate the terms of any relationship they enjoy with their classes, and that students therefore adopt a reactive role in such a relationship. A teacher-student relationship which enhances student learning would appear to be very much a function of teacher hegemony in the classroom.

The Literature of Affinity to Teachers

What the literature and our own research can provide are some clues as to the qualities which students identify in good teachers. Where students have been asked about their desired relationship with their teachers, they have been able to identify quite specific elements. The most basic is that teachers should take an interest in them as people as well as learners (Chaplain 1996a). This interest has been shown to be a factor in the rates of school attendance of traditionally 'difficult' students:

> *An adult in school who shows individualised concern for an at-risk student can have a significant positive effect on that student's attendance.*
>
> (Testerman 1996)

Teacher friendliness is "immensely important" (Wallace 1996b). Students generally like teachers with a sense of humour, and those who can use that humour to regulate classroom behaviour. Students in the early years of secondary education appear to value the personality and teaching style of their teachers more than the quality of their teaching. They dislike strictness because it distances them

> *from the relationship necessary for productive communication.*
>
> (Wallace, ibid.)

The strong sense of justice and equity shown by such students means that they have a strong dislike of what they regard as unfair treatment. Such treatment includes stereotyping (West and Beresford 1998), or "image-fixing" (Day 1996), of students, whereby teachers assume that a student who has been in trouble previously will routinely be disruptive again. Students in one study have identified the importance of their teachers being able to engage with their parents as a key element in their learning. The authors conclude that

> *We could create an effective school simply by hiring the right teachers - those committed to developing student engagement, through interactions with families.*
>
> (Coleman and Collinge 1998)

It is important that such teacher-student relationships exist, because they impinge upon a range of classroom activities that are associated with effective teaching. The necessary culture of students feeling able to ask teachers routinely for help, one of the key elements in facilitating student self-assessment, cannot exist where teacher-student relations are poor (Black and Wiliam 1998b). Good student-teacher relations contribute to good discipline in the classroom (Haroun and O'Hanlon 1997), and teachers tread a careful line between ingratiating themselves to their students and undermining their students' expectations relating to the exercise of teacher authority (Chaplain 1996a). In the maintenance of this authority, the reactive nature of students' relationships with their teachers is again stressed:

> *When teachers trust and respect young people as learners and thinkers and as people, and let them see this, they are much more likely to receive trust and respect in return.*
>
> (Scottish CCC 1996: 16)

A recent study of effective head teachers has shown the importance that students attach to the modelling of certain behaviours by heads in enhancing their learning. The featured heads were recognised as having good inter-personal skills, and to hold a set of core values centred around student achievement and welfare. These heads were seen as role models in the daily application of these core values. The warmth and richness of many of the students' responses reflected the esteem felt for the various head teachers. In particular, the heads were able to build and maintain what appeared to many students to be a personal relationship with them (Day et al. 2000). The importance of male teachers modelling behaviours for boys is acknowledged in the disquiet over the decreasing number of men attracted to the teaching profession (Lahelma et al. 1999).

Where teacher-student relations are good, it would appear easier for teachers to introduce an element of negotiation with students over the work to be done (Clarke 1991). A recent project which tried to address the dip in academic performance of Year 8 students in eight Lincolnshire secondary schools recognised the need to place student-teacher relationships on a firm footing by creating a dialogue which led to teachers adjusting reward systems, giving students more responsibility in their schools and generally making them feel

"more special" (Homerton-Schools Research Circle 1999). Where teacher-student relations are bad, and where teachers are not prepared to try to improve them, it is difficult for such negotiation to take place:

> *Schools are historically and institutionally constructed so that students don't have to express themselves and teachers don't have to listen.*
>
> (Hickey and Fitzclarence 1999)

Finally, it has been suggested that the learning of even very young children is enhanced if they are comfortable in their relationship with their teacher. Young readers are prepared to elaborate on and discuss a text more readily with such a teacher than with an adult with whom they have little or no relationship (Campbell 1986).

Research into Student Affinity to Teachers in IQEA Schools

The focus in many of our IQEA research schools on improving teaching and learning has led to a commissioning of research on what constitutes good teaching practice. Included in this research have been student views on what constitutes good teaching, and this has invariably produced views on the qualities of good teachers. A number of schools have also focused on motivation, asking students what it is that makes them want to work harder and better.

Data on student affinity to their teachers have also been derived from the following types of research projects within IQEA schools:

- Surveys of student attitudes to a range of aspects related to school life
- Follow-up research after such attitudinal surveys
- Reasons for student academic performance 'dip' in Year 8
- Causes of classroom disruption
- Student evaluation of provision in various subjects.

The various reports from which the data in the following sections are drawn are listed, as before, in Appendix 1 at the end of the book. The names of the school have been replaced by the case study number quoted in the text. All the research was undertaken between 1997 and 2000. The data have been organised under the following question headings:

1. What are the qualities of those teachers with whom students get on?

2. To what extent do students feel that their teachers motivate them?

3. To whom do students turn for help with their work?

4. What kind of changes do students discuss with their teachers regarding the work that they should do?

1. What are the qualities of those teachers with whom students get on?

- A sample of 22 students representative of the ability range in Years 7 to 9 of a north Nottinghamshire comprehensive was interviewed on aspects of teaching and learning at the school. They were asked to identify the qualities of a good teacher. Students in all years concentrated on the desirable personality traits of teachers. Only three students mentioned pedagogic skills - good teachers had good subject knowledge, explained well and made the work interesting. The remainder focused on the human and humane side of teachers. They needed a good sense of humour. They needed to be kind, friendly, pleasant and approachable. When students felt safe in approaching them, teachers needed to be helpful, caring and patient, and to listen to students. They needed to understand students' problems, lifestyles and thinking. Good teachers also needed to provide a good learning environment. They had to be firm, even quite strict, but fair in their dealings with students. They also needed to allow discussion in lessons (2).

- A Newark comprehensive school, concerned with the dip in academic performance of its students in Key Stage 3, decided to issue a questionnaire to a cross-section of Year 8 students on their learning preferences. Follow-up interviews were held with seventeen Year 8 boys in order to clarify or amplify various responses. One of the questions asked in the interviews related to how friendly teachers should be towards their students. One student wanted teachers to be like his mum, "firm and

fair". One group felt that the relationship should be similar to that with a family friend, in order to retain a reasonable distance. A number of groups recalled with warmth the relationships they had had with their Primary school teachers, but accepted that such a relationship was difficult with subject teachers they saw only a few times a week. Most students wanted some acknowledgement as a person from their teachers (two mentioned teachers not yet knowing their names at the end of the Autumn term) with some small talk, although they did not generally want to divulge information about their social lives outside school. In addition, they did not want to hear of teachers' lives in any great detail (3).

- Twelve students in Year 10 in a south Derbyshire comprehensive school were questioned individually on their attitudes to the teaching they received and the learning they achieved. The students were chosen by staff on the basis of their ability and perceived work effort. They were asked about their favourite teacher of all time, and what they remembered about how the teacher taught. Giving individual help was quoted by the majority of the students, and a large proportion of the collective responses emphasised the importance for Year 10 students of understanding work and of the quality of explanation and help offered by teachers. The importance attached to these was slightly less marked in the able, hard-working group. Teaching style and methods were important elements in the assessment of teachers and teaching by the less able groups, and hardly figured at all with the able, hard-working group, which seemed content as long as the teacher had a high level of all-round competence. The personal

qualities of teachers were also important, this time to all the groups. These included being friendly, nice and having a sense of humour (5).

- An 11-16 comprehensive school at the western end of Essex issued a questionnaire to all its 751 students on aspects of school life. One of the sections dealt with teachers. Teacher-student relations were good in Year 7, but declined in the eyes of Year 8 boys, Year 9 girls and Year 11 boys. Teachers were seen as biddable and fair in Year 7, but less so afterwards. They were seen as having favourite students by a majority of the school, particularly after Year 7. They were regarded as approachable and understanding by most groups except Year 9 girls and Year 11 boys, and understanding of students' ways by more than 60% of the school. The majority of all year-groups felt that teachers could be approached with problems. In terms of their pedagogic skills, most teachers instilled enjoyment in most of their students, although boys' enjoyment dropped 22 points between Years 7 and 11, and girls' enjoyment troughed in Year 9 (25).

- 59 Key Stage 3 students in a comprehensive school in a village to the south of Nottingham were interviewed about aspects of teaching and learning. They were chosen by staff to represent the range of ability in Years 7 to 9. They were asked what they considered to be the qualities of a good teacher. Personality traits dominated students' perceptions. Two-thirds (and considerably more girls than boys) felt that good teachers were friendly, helpful and kind. About a third suggested that having a sense of

humour was a desirable quality, and that teachers should be calm, polite and should not shout at students. Pedagogic skills were important for about a quarter of boys and girls. Fairness and justice were particularly stressed by Year 9 students (26).

- An upper school in Mansfield decided to canvass the views of a cross-section of its students in Years 9 to 14 (3rd Year Sixth) in November 1998 on good practice in teaching. Students were chosen to reflect the ability range in those years. In March 2000 it was decided to canvass views from a similar sample of students, in order to provide a comparative study. 100 students were interviewed in 1998, and 88 (including some of the original interviewees) in 2000. One of the questions asked related to the qualities of a good teacher. The three main qualities highlighted in each year remained the same: a sense of humour (39% in 1998, 28% in 2000), approachability and politeness (26%, 35%) and understanding of and respect for students (24%, 22%). Girls stressed each of these more than boys in 2000, though there had been little difference in 1998. Boys stressed the ability to explain well more than girls in 2000, though girls had stressed it more in 1998 (27).

- 108 students, representative of the ability range in Years 7 to 9, were interviewed about teaching and learning in their comprehensive school on the eastern outskirts of Nottingham. They were asked to identify the qualities of their favourite teacher of all time, and about how they taught. Students identified favourite teachers in about equal numbers from their

Primary or Secondary experience. The overwhelming majority of features identified were related to teachers' personal qualities. Boys highlighted teachers who were "in tune" with students, who had a sense of humour and who were fair. Girls tended to emphasise qualities which implied some sort of interaction or close relationship with their favourite teacher, teachers who were helpful, pleasant, approachable, caring and funny. Both genders liked teachers who had understood them and their interests. There were considerably fewer references to the teachers' teaching style, although a quarter of the boys interviewed referred to the fun activities which their favourite teachers had organised in lessons (28).

- 51 students, 26 of whom were girls, from Years 7 to 11 were identified by a Cambridge comprehensive as 'low level' or 'medium level' disruptives in class. They were interviewed in small groups about aspects of teaching and learning in the school. Students were asked to identify what was special about a particular teacher from whom they learned well. Nearly all students were able to name at least one teacher. A sense of humour was identified by a broad range of students as a feature of an effective teacher. Boys and girls in all year-groups highlighted firmness as a requisite teaching quality, with older girls seeing this as a means of assuring that they could work in class. Older students, in Years 10 and 11, valued a more personal relationship with a teacher, one where there was individual explanation, and mutual respect (29).

Commentary

Students in the case study schools, when asked to identify the qualities of a good teacher or their favourite teacher, generally highlighted features of the teacher's personality rather than of their pedagogical skills. Even students who were regarded by their schools as mildly disruptive could identify at least one teacher with whom they had a good relationship, and who enabled them to learn. A number of students had fond memories of teachers who taught them at Primary school. Of these personality traits, students further highlighted those relating to interpersonal skills. The teachers they admired were kind, friendly, approachable and had a sense of humour. The students perceived that the teachers 'understood' them, which suggests that there was some communication about the students' life-styles. However, when asked to talk in more detail in one of the schools about the nature of that interaction, students indicated that they did not want an over-intimate relationship with their teachers. This would appear to confirm that one of the skills required by teachers was not appearing to be too "with it" (Chaplain 1996a).

Where teachers appeared to have the basic elements of humanity and approachability, students apparently wanted them to be more proactive in their role as teacher. They admired teachers who were helpful, showed caring and were patient when explaining work. After the initial years of Secondary education, students also admired teachers who were fair and consistent in their dealings with students, and who showed students respect. Teachers appeared to be liked less after Year 7: this may be partly explained by the requirements

of coursework in Year 9 and of public examinations in Years 10 and 11 changing the nature of teacher-student relationships, with teachers becoming more demanding of students. In addition, students in one of the case study schools conceded that it was more difficult to have the same relationship with Secondary teachers who taught them occasionally than it was with Primary teachers who taught them nearly all the time. Students in the GCSE years appeared to lay greater stress on teachers' pedagogic skills of explanation than those in earlier years.

2. ***To what extent do students feel that their teachers motivate them?***

- All 585 students in Years 7 and 8 in a southeast Essex comprehensive school were issued with questionnaires asking for views on a range of aspects of school life. One of these aspects was motivation. They were asked to rank factors which made them work in lessons to the best of their ability. Both genders in both years ranked interest in the subject as the main factor. Year 7 students felt that teacher expectations were next in importance: Year 8 students ranked good teacher explanation second. Liking the teacher was ranked higher in Year 7 by both genders than in Year 8. Receiving praise was regarded as important by over half the cohort, but was still ranked last of the six listed features in each year by each gender (15).

- One of the sections in the questionnaire administered in case study school 25 to 751 students related to motivation. Over 70% of all students said they were keen to get to most lessons, and over 40% regarded the work they did as very important. The majority of students in Years 7 and 9, and of girls in Year 8, often did not want to stop working in lessons. Motivation to do homework was strong in Years 7, 8 and 9, with more than 60% of students doing over 3 hours a night. This was sustained by girls in Years 10 and 11, but the proportion of boys doing this amount dipped to 40% in Year 11. This was partly explained by the respective social habits of the genders - girls went out less than boys in the evening. Over 40% of boys went out five times or more per week. About 10% more boys than girls in each year-group watched TV and videos every night. Boys' viewing peaked in Year 9. More than 40% of boys in Years 10 and 11 did paid work for more than 3 hours a week. About 5% less girls did an equivalent amount in each year-group (25).

- Thirty students doing business studies in the sixth form of a north Hertfordshire comprehensive school were asked what motivated them to work. A third of the sample felt that the relaxed classroom atmosphere achieved by their teachers was an important factor. A further third felt that teachers enforcing deadlines was also important, and the same proportion highlighted the way teachers involved students in the organisation of class- and course-work. The encouragement and pressure of parents were cited by over half the sample. Students identified a range of aspects of the

subject that they particularly enjoyed. Over half were also motivated by their desire to do well in examinations (30).

- In a comprehensive school in southwest Essex, staff selected a sample of 51 students from Years 7 to 10, half of whom were deemed to be work-motivated and half demotivated. A questionnaire was issued relating to what motivated them. One of the questions asked them to rank features of a lesson in which they wanted to work. Lessons with a practical element and teacher praise had a motivating effect upon all year groups. Rewards were important in Years 7 and 8, although their importance fell away thereafter. Students were also asked to rank characteristics of lessons that made them stop working. They did not highlight any of the characteristics listed as particularly strong reasons for stopping them working. The strongest reason identified was the time of day. A sizeable proportion of students claimed to work hard in practical subjects, as well as in maths and English. Personal subject preferences, along with an element of fun in lessons, were important elements in students' motivation to work hard (31).

Commentary

Personal subject preferences seem to be a leading factor in making students want to work. This appears to be a particularly strong factor where students have exercised some choice in the subjects they wish to pursue, for example for 'A' levels, or where subjects contain a strong practical element. Lower

down the Secondary school, where students appear to get on better with their teachers, motivation seems linked to pleasing the teacher. Hence teacher expectations were identified in one of the case study schools as being an important motivator for Year 7 students. Where an earlier chapter identified the importance that students, particularly in Years 7 and 8, attach to merit awards, it appears that these may also be valued as an indication of achieving teacher expectations. In another school, homework appears to be done more assiduously in the early Secondary years.

As students further up the Secondary school change their attitudes towards teachers, and begin to value different teacher qualities, what motivates them also changes. Good teacher explanation is valued. The sixth-formers in case study 30 above valued the classroom atmosphere created by staff. The importance of teacher and parent press is recognised, and seems to rank almost as important as encouragement.

3. To whom do students turn for help with their work?

- In the questionnaire issued to 51 students in case study school 31 (see last section), students were asked who they turned to for help with work at school if they needed it. 29% of the sample said they turned to a teacher, with a greater proportion of students responding in this way in Year 7. This was less than the 35% who turned to their mothers at home for help with work. Only 8% said that they consulted friends (31).

- In undertaking an evaluation of the pastoral provision for students in Years 7 to 10 of a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive school, staff asked a sample of 34 students to whom they would turn if they experienced a problem at school. 82% said they would consult their form tutors, 32% their head of year and an identical proportion their friends. More said they would consult members of their families than would ask subject teachers for help (32).

- English staff at a comprehensive school in Cambridge wished to find out students' views on their preparedness for exams in Years 9 and 10. A sample of 56 students, reflecting the ability range and gender split in each of the years, was interviewed. Students were asked who had helped them prepare for the exams. 91% of Year 9 students quoted teachers, with 75% mentioning them in Year 10. 37% in Year 9 mentioned friends, with over twice as many girls as boys consulting them. No friends were consulted for Year 10 exams. Parents were consulted by a quarter of the Year 9 sample, with nearly twice as many boys consulting them than girls (33).

- As part of an evaluation of Year 10 'mock' examinations in a Cambridge comprehensive school, a sample of twelve students, selected to reflect the ability range within the year, was asked who had helped them prepare. Teachers were mentioned by nine of the students, providing revision plans, opportunities for classroom revision, lists of areas to be covered, and working through old exam papers or providing individual help to students. Parents were also mentioned as helping by nine students. Help

here varied from testing on notes and encouragement to keeping students in at nights in order to revise. Friends were not quoted as helping to the same extent. Only three mentioned them, and a number were at pains to point out that they had deliberately avoided their friends during the revision period. Four students said they preferred to revise without anyone's help (34).

Commentary

Students showed themselves more inclined to consult teachers and parents about work problems than friends, particularly for examinations which they deemed to be important, like Year 10 'mock' examinations. In some cases, the advice of friends seemed consciously to be avoided at such times, students preferring even to revise without any help from anyone. Specialist staff, like form tutors, were consulted where students had specific problems which were not necessarily academic in nature. Students seemed more inclined to use friends at such times as well.

4. *What kind of changes do students discuss with their teachers regarding the work that they should do?*

- The general studies department of a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive school wanted students to evaluate the courses on offer in Years 10 and 11. Questionnaires were issued to all 217 students. Students

were asked which skills and knowledge they would like to learn in the subject in addition to those they had already identified. They were also asked why they felt them to be important. About half of the Year 10 students expressed no wish to acquire any more skills or knowledge in general studies lessons. About a third of Year 11 students did not want to learn any more skills, and about a quarter wanted to acquire no further knowledge. No specific skill recorded more than 10% from either year-group. Only sex education scored over 10% for topics requested in the future. Interest, relevance and importance were highlighted as the main reasons for including the suggested topics (22).

- In the same school, staff wanted to canvass student opinion on innovative uses of ICT prior to a national company putting all its Year 8 students on the internet at home. In addition, the company was also intending to set up a school intranet which would enable teachers to post students' homework. 138 students returned questionnaires. 76% saw the opportunity to use the internet for research activities, but only 6% quoted the potential of school websites as a means of communicating homework instructions, and only 4% the opportunity to e-mail teachers for help (23).

- Staff in the same school wanted to undertake an evaluation of the pastoral provision in Years 7 to 10. As part of this evaluation a sample of 34 students, representing the ability range across each of the years, was interviewed. One of the questions asked related to their feelings about how form tutorial periods were run. Over two-thirds were happy with the

system in operation. Of the 1 in 5 who wanted to change, about half of them wanted a small timetable adjustment, and half wanted greater student choice and involvement in lessons (32).

- The German department at the same school wanted to review the use of IT in its lessons. 122 students in Years 8 to 10 were asked by questionnaire, *inter alia*, in what ways its use could be improved. Students suggested that the frequency of its use could be increased, that more language games be used, and that the internet and CD-Roms be consulted more often (35).

- In the same school, the maths department wanted to find out the views of its 125 Year 8 students of the shift away from workbooks to a more text-book based scheme of work in Year 8. Amongst the questions asked was how they would change lessons if they were given the opportunity. A quarter wanted more fun and humour in lessons, with a further 1 in 10 requesting more games. About a tenth wanted more practical lessons. The same proportion wanted less textbook based work, and more booklet work (36).

- Staff at a comprehensive school on the edge of Nottingham wanted to follow up on some issues raised in a survey of students' views on the school. One of the issues was the extent to which they felt they could talk with staff about the classwork they should do. Two groups of students from each of Years 7 to 10 were interviewed in single-gender groups of three. Students mentioned a small number of lessons, including English

and history, where they felt they had some say. Both girls and boys in Year 10 mentioned the Youth Award Scheme. In some lessons students were given a range of questions or foci from which to choose, and some teachers provided optional extension activities. Year 8 girls said that they only had any say in the last lesson at the end of each school year (37).

Commentary

According to the case studies outlined above, few schools would appear to talk routinely with students about the work they should do. In case study school 37 the limited choice of activities provided by teachers does not seem to result from any class negotiation.

The other case studies, all from the same school, suggest that students, when given the opportunity to suggest adjustments to their lessons, are quite conservative in their views. In most of the studies less than half of the sample was inclined to suggest any changes, and any changes suggested by the minority tended to call for more of the same diet they were already receiving. For example, the Year 8 students could see no further learning benefits, other than an increased access to the internet, as a result of being put on-line in their homes. Few new topics were suggested for tutorial periods in another case study, and the switch from workbooks to textbooks received little comment or criticism.

Finding reasons for such conservatism is speculative. Teachers under pressure to deliver the National Curriculum may shy away from opportunities to discuss with their students a less teacher-centred approach to curriculum planning. The lack of a range of options suggested by students where they are given an opportunity to contribute suggests that there has been little classroom dialogue about different ways of teaching and learning. Students are therefore limited in the alternatives they can suggest by the boundaries imposed by their own learning experiences. Finally, students are clearly not used to taking part in discussions about the work they should do.

Summary

From the literature review, it appears that

- students like teachers to show an interest in them as people, as well as learners;
- students value the personal qualities of teachers – friendliness, a sense of humour, a sense of justice;
- students' attitudes to teachers affect their ability to self-assess, discipline in the classroom and whether they negotiate with teachers about work to be done;
- teachers' modelling of behaviour is an important influence on students.

From the review of the research in the case study schools, it appears that

- students at all levels appear to value the interpersonal qualities of their teachers above their pedagogic skills;

- the qualities valued in a teacher include humour, being pleasant, approachable, understanding, firm and fair;
- these valued qualities impact upon students' receptivity to leaning and upon the teacher's ability to keep order;
- teachers' pedagogic skills become more important to students taking public examinations, who are more likely to turn to teachers than to any other group for help;
- students are quite conservative in their views when asked about changes to working practices in the classroom.

From both it appears that students learn most effectively when

- they get on well with their teachers
- they are motivated by their teachers
- they find their teachers helpful
- they are involved to some extent in the organisation and content of the work they do.

CHAPTER 6

Learning Repertoire

French with Year 10, last lesson, Friday, May. The school is set in the middle of a huge council estate. It has poor examination results, and an equally poor reputation within the town.

The usual pushing and shoving by the boys as they wait for the teacher. He wants me to look at two students during the lesson, one a quiet girl and the other one of the boisterous boys. The teacher arrives. He is surprisingly young- and fragile-looking. The boys rush to the front of the classroom, where chairs are laid out in three rows.

The teacher speaks French throughout the lesson, and even cracks jokes in French. There are no complaints from anyone about not understanding. He uses an OHP acetate as an initial focus for the students' attention. He lectures, questions and makes students repeat after him. He then mimes an action, and invites students to identify the action. Shortly afterwards, the students leave their seats and break up into groups, where they do their own mimes to each other. There is little surface noise above the excited chatter of random guesses.

The students resume their seats, and play a memory game led by the teacher. After this they quietly take their seats and form a semi-circle. They play a paired game, the rules of which they clearly already know. The teacher joins the semi-circle as a participant and, because his presence makes the total of participants odd, a puppet is placed in one of the seats. At the end of a fixed length of time, one of each pair joins up with a new partner. The puppet is a shared class joke, and no-one seems self-conscious in conversation with it.

At the end of the activity students pick up their chairs and return in an orderly way to the front of the classroom. The last three minutes of the hour-long lesson are taken up with students scoring their participation in the lesson on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating full participation and 1 indicating poor and spasmodic participation. The teacher records the scores in a book, and occasionally challenges a score, though he doesn't change it if the student remains adamant. The boisterous boy I have been observing scores himself 4: I scored his on-task behaviour as 87%. The quiet girl has been taken ill during the lesson, and doesn't give a score: I scored her at 73% on-task. The teacher tells me after the lesson that the level of scores has risen gradually since September, and so has his perception of levels of student participation in lessons.

All day with Year 8, Tuesday, June. The school is set in fields on the edge of a large city in the Midlands. It has a growing local reputation matched by its improving examination results.

I'm looking at two fairly able students to try to map what kinds of learning experiences they have in a typical school day. The first lesson is English. After the register is taken the teacher organises the class into groups, and they brainstorm a topic for about ten minutes. There is a hum of purposeful activity, and the students are clearly conversant in the technique. The richness of their responses in the subsequent plenary confirms this impression. In the course of the 45-minute lesson the class breaks up into groups on two more occasions. The next lesson is humanities, where students work quietly over a handout in pairs. In the science lesson which

follows they undertake a practical activity in pairs, then move quietly into a large circle to discuss their work. The teacher seems to play little part beyond chairing the circle and organising the order of speakers.

Art consists mainly of individual work. The second science lesson contains another brainstorming session, and more groupwork looking at and evaluating health education leaflets. The last lesson of the day consists of individual work using maths textbooks. I ask the Deputy Head about the versatility of the teachers in their teaching and of the students in their learning. He tells me that there has been extensive school-based INSET on using various teaching strategies in the classroom, and that Year 7 students have an induction course lasting five days in effective use of these strategies at the beginning of the academic year. The two students observed have been exposed to twelve different teaching strategies in the course of the day, and have both been in excess of 80% on-task.

What is striking about these two vignettes is not merely the range of strategies used by the teachers, but the versatility of the students in responding to them. The teachers have, in terms of retaining the attention of the students under observation, effectively applied a wide range of teaching strategies. The students, in terms of their observed responses, have shown themselves able to respond to these strategies and to participate fully in the concomitant activities. Effective teaching and learning appear to have taken place.

The weight of research evidence, both our own and that of others (see, for example, Brophy and Good 1986, Joyce and Weil 1986, Joyce et al. 1987), has led my

colleagues and I in the IQEA Project to identify an extensive teaching repertoire as one of the classroom conditions necessary for school improvement to take place (West et al. 1995, Hopkins et al. 1998):

> *where the teacher employs a range of specific strategies and teaching models more students demonstrate high levels of involvement in and commitment to the goals of a lesson.*
>
> (Hopkins et al. 1997: 62)

The classroom experiences described above confirm the view that "models of teaching are in fact models of learning" (Joyce et al. 1997: 8), that students need to acquire the learning skills necessary to take full advantage of the teaching strategies employed by their teachers. In effect, they need to 'learn how to learn'.

The vignettes also suggest, however, a symbiotic relationship between teaching and learning in the classroom. They suggest that the teachers have developed the learning repertoire of their students to take full advantage of the teaching repertoire offered in the classroom, but they also suggest that the teachers have adjusted their teaching repertoire to cater for the learning needs of their students. This symbiosis of teaching and learning is the subject matter of this chapter.

The structure of this chapter is slightly different from the other five dealing with the other Student Conditions. While there is still a literature review, and some discussion of the implications of the chapter's findings for school improvement, the empirical data are derived from a set of research projects where identical research questions could be asked - what is the teaching diet provided by the school, and what are the

learning preferences of the students in the school? The research section not only reports on and analyses the data derived from the research, but also conceptualises and describes the instrument developed to answer the two research questions.

The Literature of Learning Repertoire

The relation between the application of a wide range of teaching strategies and effective learning in the classroom has been the subject of periodic but fierce debate during the last thirty years. This has been for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was an extensive debate about the efficiency as well as the effectiveness of various teaching strategies, particularly in the Primary sector, following the publication of the Plowden Report in 1967. The report recommended, *inter alia,* "a combination of individual, group and class work" in Primary schools, and welcomed "the trend towards individual learning" (CACE 1967: 474). The subsequent debate had an added poignancy, taking place as it did in a period of public expenditure cuts and a Great Debate about priorities in education (Beresford 1995). It both questioned the efficiency of attempting to provide such a wide range of strategies (see, for example, Cox and Boyson 1977), and rehearsed the comparative benefits of what were polarised into 'formal', whole-class strategies and 'informal', group- and child-centred ones (see Bennett and Entwistle 1977, Aitkin et al. 1981).

Secondly, the prescriptive content of the National Curriculum now taught in schools has meant that teachers have not always been able to rely upon the intrinsic interest of what they teach in order to retain the interests of all students in their classes. Teachers have sought a variety of ways of presenting similar materials and topics. Finally, the

thrust of central government since the early 1990s to improve examination and test results has driven schools to look at various ways of enhancing their performance. One of these ways has been to encourage teachers to look at alternative ways of delivering the curriculum to groups of students who have formerly been regarded as marginal within their schools (see Southworth 1996). The subsequent debate about the most appropriate teaching strategies to be used has again largely centred on the Primary sector, and has this time involved the government and other related bodies (Alexander 1991, DES 1991, Alexander et al. 1992, Woodhead 1992, OFSTED 1995b, DFEE 1997b). The debate has once more focused on the relative merits of whole class, group and individual teaching, and has drawn on evidence from the schools of our more successful industrial competitors overseas (Reynolds and Farrell 1996). It has again spilled over into a general debate about cost-effectiveness in education, and whether the sizes of classes are an important factor in effective teaching (OFSTED 1995c, NAHT/University of Nottingham 1996, Labour Party 1997). The government has taken the unprecedented step of effectively prescribing teaching methods, in the delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy Hour, in its Primary schools (DFEE 1998a, DFEE 1999).

While it has been suggested that the "complex pedagogy" employed results in "a wide variation between the levels of quality" in our schools (Reynolds and Farrell 1996: 58), any criticism of too wide a range of teaching strategies being used by teachers has been comparatively rare. The debate has tended to concentrate more on the over-use of particular teaching strategies in the delivery of the curriculum. Thus the report of the so-called 'Three Wise Men' into Primary classroom practice, commissioned by the DES, noted that

the substantial body of research which now exists about Primary school teaching methods endorses what commonsense would expect: that the debate about the relative effectiveness of traditional and progressive methods ignores the fact that different organisational strategies and teaching techniques are needed for different purposes. Teachers need to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches in order to make informed choices and, when necessary, should be prepared to learn new skills in the interests of effective teaching and learning.

(Alexander et al. 1992: 27)

OFSTED reported, in its findings on class size in 1995, that

appropriate variety of methods, including well-directed whole class teaching and activity, featured strongly in those lessons judged by inspectors to be successful.

(OFSTED 1995b: 40).

The philosophical justifications for the provision of a range of teaching strategies in classrooms have been largely client-centred. Their fundamental tenet has been that the employment of such a range is likely to impact upon a greater number of students than the use of a more limited number of such strategies. Corno and Snow, for example, have suggested that students each have learning aptitudes which comprise

propensities for processing information in certain ways that develop around ability-personality intersections.

(Corno and Snow 1986)

For them the process of teaching involves either the development of these aptitudes by instruction in cognitive skills, or the circumvention of and compensation for students' lack of aptitude by adaptive teaching through the provision of individual help, guidance and information. They conclude that

> *since learner aptitudes and inaptitudes are multiple in virtually any group, adaptive teaching always requires the provision of alternative routes to common goals.*
>
> (Ibid.)

Kolb, using a similar construct of learning styles based upon the personality of the learner (Kolb 1984), suggests that the incongruency of the learning environment provided by the teacher and the learning styles favoured by individual students can lead to anomie and alienation in the classroom. The implication is that the consistent failure to address the learning styles of groups of students can lead to forms of classroom disruption that themselves can affect the learning of others.

What is being advocated is the construction of what Elliott has called "a common stock of professional insights" (Elliott 1984) in order to maximise the degree of student accessibility to learning in the classroom. The Accelerated Schools project in America is an example of this paradigm:

> *Lessons use a variety of techniques such as experimentation, exploration, peer tutoring and trial and error on the part of the child. Children are encouraged to take risks. The children discover, construe, collaborate and discuss rather than simply reading, writing, copying and memorising.*
>
> (Hague and Walker 1996)

Seminars involving teachers in participating schools had enabled one teacher

> *to share my knowledge on how to incorporate students of all learning styles and levels.*
>
> (Ibid.)

In the course of acquiring an extensive teaching repertoire, teachers are urged to develop that repertoire in directions which will engage the learning styles of their students.

Research into Learning Repertoire in IQEA schools

There is already an extensive literature on the component parts of effective teaching (see, for example, Rosenshine and Stevens 1986, Gipps 1992, Harris 1995), but less on the process of matching teaching strategies to students' learning styles. There have been a number of instruments designed, mainly in the form of questionnaires or interview schedules, to try to discover the learning preferences of discrete groups of students: of secondary science students (Cunliffe 1995), for students excluded from school (De Pear 1997), for eight- to eleven-year-olds (Norwich 1998) and for Year 10 students (Barnett 1985). However, much of the matching of teaching and learning styles has been extremely speculative, based upon the premise that if a sufficient variety of strategies are employed, then a catch-all effect will apply:

> *By offering a range of learning opportunities, including those that use their strengths, teachers are more likely to provide a learning experience that students feel good about.*
>
> (Faccenda and Fielding 1992)

If teaching excludes or dissuades those who learn in ways other than that of the subject specialist involved, ... entitlement is denied.

(Fielding 1994)

Increasing the range of learning experiences provided in our schools increases the likelihood of more students becoming more adept learners.

(Joyce et al. 1997: 15)

The need for some form of dialogue between teachers and students about teaching and learning methods in the classroom has been recognised by a number of writers (see, for example, Levin 1994, Hord 1997, Hubbard 1997) and, increasingly, by a number of the schools in the IQEA Project. These schools have shown themselves willing to interrogate students on their views about what constitutes effective teaching. They have, however, called for a research instrument, easy to administer, which can both help them match what goes on in classrooms more closely to the preferences of their students, and provide clues about where to develop the teaching repertoire of their teachers and the learning repertoire of their students.

In 1996 I was approached by an IQEA school in Essex, concerned about its performance in public examinations, to undertake an audit of the teaching strategies used in its classrooms, and a survey of students' views on those strategies. I consulted a colleague at Cambridge, Michael Fielding, who directed me to the work of David Kolb. The socio-psychological and epistemological theory underpinning Kolb's conceptualisation of the learning process are too complex to be adequately dealt with

within the confines of this chapter. However, some background knowledge may be useful in order to appreciate the principles behind the derived instrument.

Kolb's seminal work, *Experiential Learning* (Kolb 1984), effectively reconceptualised Piaget's work on developmental learning in the light of subsequent neurological research findings. What Piaget regarded as four sequential phases of learning (sensory-motor, representational, concrete operational and formal operational) were re-defined by Kolb into four distinct and authentic learning styles, with no implicit hierarchical structure. These four learning styles can be represented as quadrants in a grid where the two dimensions of perceiving and processing information have been juxtaposed (see Figure 7).

Kolb gives useful descriptors of each learning style, which I have summarised in Figure 8. He further illuminates the four approaches by applying each to the playing of pool. I have found, in relating Kolb's work to English audiences, that the less culture- and gender-specific example of learning how to use a computer has been more apposite.

LEARNING STYLES

SENSING/ FEELING
Concrete Experiences

Accommodators	***Divergers***
DOING	**WATCHING**
Testing implications of concepts in new situations	**Observation and Reflections**
Convergers	***Assimilators***

THINKING
Formation of abstract concepts and generalisations

Figure 7: Kolb's Four Learning Styles (adapted from Fielding 1994

Learning style.	Dominant learning orientations.	Greatest strengths.	Best learning situations.	Organisation of knowledge.	Learner characteristics.
Accommodative	Concrete experience Active experimentation	Doing things Carrying out plans, tasks Getting involved in new experiences	Opportunity seeking Risk taking Action	Adaptation to changing, immediate circumstances Scepticism of theory	Intuitive Trial-and-error approach Reliance upon others for information At ease with people Sometimes impatient, pushy
Divergent	Concrete experience Reflective observation	Imaginative ability Awareness of meaning and values	Generation of alternative ideas and implications	Adaptation by observation rather than action Viewing concrete situations from many perspectives	Interested in people Imaginative Feeling-oriented
Convergent	Abstract conceptualisation Active experimentation	Problem-solving Decision-making Practical application of ideas	Conventional intelligence tests Problems with single correct answer	Hypothetical-deductive reasoning Focus on specific problems	Controlled expression of emotion Preference of technical tasks to interpersonal issues
Assimilative	Abstract conceptualisation Reflective observation	Inductive reasoning Creation of theoretical models	Assimilating disparate observations into integrated explanation	Logically sound and precise theories Re-examines facts if they don't fit	Concern with ideas, abstract concepts Less concerned with people

Figure 8: Characteristics of Kolb's four Learning Styles (adapted from Kolb 1984: 77-78).

Someone with an accommodative learning style will sit at the keyboard and try out different methods, in a hit-and-miss way, of achieving the same end. They will listen to advice from others, but will trust their own intuition at least as much as the information derived from others. Divergent learners will want to watch others working on a computer, and will want to discuss their experience with them before trying a variety of alternative approaches themselves. Assimilative learners will also want to watch and listen, but will make their own notes and design their own method of working, which they will then test out. Convergent learners will consult the manual, and approach learning how to use the computer in a logical way, on their own.

Clearly most people will learn to use the computer using a mixture of these approaches. However, Kolb's typology recognises the integrity of each learning style as a way of accessing and processing information. He argues that an individual's approach to a learning situation will be strongly oriented to one of these approaches. The research literature suggests that the range of teaching strategies and learning opportunities operational within the school context needs to cater for each of these learning styles in order that numbers of students are not excluded from the learning process.

Kolb's work concentrates mainly on university students, and his Learning Style Inventory, derived from his four models of learning, is intended more for individual adult learners. The Inventory does not lend itself easily to an analysis of group needs and preferences. However, much of what Kolb writes about learning environments is applicable to English Secondary school

classrooms, and much of what he says about learning styles can be used in a broadbrush way to assess group as well as individual needs. The value of such an approach has been acknowledged elsewhere:

> *There is no one theory or model which fully describes learning differences or offers a panacea for teachers. Working with one of the models can help teachers to recognise powerfully the extent of the differences in the way that people learn and the fact that there is no single best way to teach. They can provide teachers with a powerful tool to help them examine and develop their practice.*
>
> (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum 1996)

In addition, Fielding had usefully identified a range of classroom activities and strategies associated with each of the four learning styles (see Fielding 1994). Adapting this list, I produced an observation schedule which could be used to record the incidence of these various activities in a lesson. The schedule has been reproduced elsewhere (Beresford 1998a), and appears here as Figure 9.

Each activity is coded according to the learning style for which it caters. As each activity occurs in the lesson, its incidence is noted. At the end of the period of observation the different number of strategies and learning activities employed by the teacher is totted up and recorded, in the boxes provided, against the appropriate learning style. Hence the lesson can be said to have a particular profile corresponding to the combination of numbers in the boxes.

IQEA

Date: Lesson:

Teaching Strategies.		Incidence.
Accuracy stressed	C	
Accurate recall	As	
Action Planning	As	
Brainstorming	D	
Case study	As	
Choice of activities	C	
Classwork	As	
Clear goals expressed	C	
Comprehension	C	
Data collection	As	
Demonstrations	As	
Discussion	D	
Group interaction	D	
Group work organised	Ac	
Gut feelings asked for	Ac	
Hand-outs	As	
Investigations	D	
Lecture	As	
Mistakes allowed	Ac	
Note-taking	C	
Open-ended questions asked	D	
Paired work	D	
Planning of work by pupils	C	
Practising skills	C	
Problem-solving	C	
Reflection on experience	D	
Relevance of work explained	C	
Reporting back methods varied	Ac	
Role play	D	
Scientific experiments	C	
Simulations used	Ac	
Specialisms tapped	As	
Testing	C	
Thoroughness stressed	C	
Variety of approaches	Ac	
Video	As	
Working alone	C, As	
Worksheets	C	

Ac		**D**	
C		**As**	

Figure 9: Observation Schedule of Teaching Strategies, based on Kolb's four Learning Styles.

These can be converted into percentages of the total number of strategies and activities used. Figure 10 shows a sheet which has been filled in. The experience of such observations over three years suggests that a twenty-minute observation provides sufficient evidence of the likely profile of lessons.

In order to assess students' preferences for these characteristic teaching activities, I originally drew up a similar schedule on which students were asked to indicate which of the activities they preferred. This original schedule is also reproduced elsewhere (Beresford 1998a). This schedule has subsequently been refined in order to make the nature of the various activities more explicit to students, and thus to reduce the amount of time needed for elaboration by the teacher or researcher prior to students completing the schedule. I further refined the instrument by introducing 'Don't like', 'Don't mind' and 'Like' categories of response. This allowed for a Likert-type scoring of responses, and ultimately enabled comparisons between different-sized groups to be made more easily. The revised student schedule is reproduced as Figure 11. The teaching activities are not coded on the student schedule in order to reduce the amount of explanation required. Students take on average ten minutes to fill this in.

By scoring 'Don't like' responses as 0, 'Don't mind' as 1 and 'Like' as 2, and adding the total for each of the learning style categories, a profile similar to that derived from lesson observations can be derived for each student. By adding the totals of all students in a particular group, a group profile can be obtained. These profiles indicate individual and group learning style

IQEA

Date: 22.10.96 Lesson: Spanish, Year 8

Teaching Strategies.		Incidence.
Accuracy stressed	C	
Accurate recall	As	/
Action Planning	As	
Brainstorming	D	
Case study	As	
Choice of activities	C	
Classwork	As	/
Clear goals expressed	C	/
Comprehension	C	
Data collection	As	
Demonstrations	As	/
Discussion	D	
Group interaction	D	
Group work organised	Ac	
Gut feelings asked for	Ac	
Hand-outs	As	
Investigations	D	
Lecture	As	/
Mistakes allowed	Ac	
Note-taking	C	
Open-ended questions asked	D	/
Paired work	D	/
Planning of work by pupils	C	
Practising skills	C	
Problem-solving	C	
Reflection on experience	D	
Relevance of work explained	C	
Reporting back methods varied	Ac	
Role play	D	
Scientific experiments	C	
Simulations used	Ac	
Specialisms tapped	As	
Testing	C	/
Thoroughness stressed	C	
Variety of approaches	Ac	
Video	As	
Working alone	C, As	/
Worksheets	C	/

Ac	**0** ***(0%)***	**D**	**2** ***(18%)***
C	**4** ***(36%)***	**As**	**5** ***(45%)***

Figure 10: Completed Observation Schedule of Teaching Strategies, based on Kolb's four Learning Styles

IQEA

Please tick which box best fits your feelings about the use of these activities in the teaching of _____

Description of Activity.	Don't like	Don't mind	Like
One where accuracy is important			
One where I'm asked to recall information accurately			
One where the teacher involves me and the class in the planning of our work			
One where we are asked to brainstorm ideas and facts			
One where we look at case studies and other real-life examples			
One where we are given a choice of activities to learn the same thing			
One where we are taught as a class, and all do the same work			
One where the teacher makes the goals of the lesson clear			
One where we have to interpret information given to us			
One where we have to collect information and data ourselves			
One where the teacher demonstrates something			
One where we have a group or class discussion			
One where we can work things out in groups			
One where the teacher organises groupwork			
One where the teacher asks us for our feelings about something			
One where the teacher gives us information on printed sheets			
One where we have to undertake investigations			
One where the teacher gives us information through teaching in front of the class			
One where I'm allowed to make mistakes			
One where I take notes			
One where lots of different answers are possible			
One where I work in pairs			
One where I plan my own work			
One where we practise skills			
One where we have to solve a problem			
One where I'm asked to think about my experiences			
One where the reason I'm doing something is clear to me			
One where we can report back our findings in different ways			
One where we have role play			
One where we do experiments			
One where we have to deal with simulated, real-life situations			
One where I can use my particular skills			
One where we are being tested			
One where I have to be thorough and careful in my work			
One where the teacher uses different teaching methods			
One where we have a video			
One where I work alone			
One where worksheets are given out			

I am in Year

I am male / female
(ring correct one)

Thank you for taking time to fill in this questionnaire

Figure 11: Student learning preference questionnaire

preferences. The schedule is versatile inasmuch as it can be used to gauge individual's learning preferences as well as group ones. Students' preferences in individual subjects can be assessed as well as their general learning preferences. It can also be used to assess any gender differences, or differences between year groups.

The technique has been used to date in eight schools. Some comparative data about these schools is provided in the table below. All the schools have both male and female students. The number on roll and the percentages of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C are derived from the published school performance tables for 1997.

The Schools.

Sch'l	Status	Students	Location	Roll	A*-C
A	GMS	11-18	Centre of northern industrial city	1032	55
B	GMS	11-16	Thames estuary town	1031	15
C	Comp	11-16	Centre of Midlands city	676	19
D	GMS	11-18	Herts. town on edge of London	1056	69
E	Comp	11-16	Estate school in Midlands city	424	2
F	GMS	11-16	Essex town, nr. M25 and NE London	772	25
G	Comp	11-16	Centre of E. Anglian town	598	75
H	Comp	11-18	Rural Derbyshire	1060	36

Data on students' learning preferences were obtained from all the schools except school G. Lessons were observed in six of the schools, with F and H being the exceptions. A total of 74 lessons were observed. These have been categorised in the table below.

Categorisation.	A	B	C	D	E	G	Total
Creative Arts (art, drama, music)	2	2	3	4	1	2	14
English	2	1	2	1	2	2	10
Humanities (history, geography, RE, core)	3	3	1	3	3	2	15
Languages (French, German, Urdu)	1	1	1	2	1	1	7
Maths	2	-	1	-	2	2	7
PE	-	-	1	-	1	1	3
Science (including child development)	3	2	1	2	1	2	11
Technology (DT, IT)	2	1	-	-	1	3	7
Totals	**15**	**10**	**10**	**12**	**12**	**15**	**74**

The coverage enables cross-school comparisons to be made in all categories except maths, PE and technology.

Teaching Activities.

The year-groups being taught in the various lessons are recorded in the table below. No Year 11 and 'A' Level lessons were seen.

Year-groups.	A	B	C	D	E	G	Total
Year 7	-	-	8	-	4	6	18
Year 8	15	6	2	-	5	5	33
Year 9	-	-	-	12	3	4	19
Year 10	-	4	-	-	-	-	4

The number of different strategies and activities used in the observed lessons ranged from seven to 23. Because this chapter is concerned about how well teaching strategies cater for students' learning preferences, the lesson profiles have been expressed in percentages, in other words accommodative, divergent, assimilative and convergent activities are expressed as percentages of the total number of teaching activities employed. The profiles of lessons are presented in the format of Figure 7.

The lesson profiles show a reasonable balance between doing and watching orientations in all of the subject categories, but a marked imbalance between sensing and thinking orientations except in drama and a few other isolated lessons. In creative arts (Figure 12), the profiles suggest a strong element of teacher instruction and direction in art and music, and less surprisingly a strong element of social interaction and learning in drama. English lessons (Figure 13) show a marked lack of accommodative activities, and a general emphasis on the use of convergent and assimilative ones. Teachers in RE, geography and history lessons (Figure 14) depend heavily upon convergent and assimilative activities: the two exceptions in the fifteen lessons observed were teachers teaching general humanities rather than specific humanities subjects. Teachers in all seven modern languages lessons largely ignored accommodative and divergent activities (Figure 15), as did all but one of the science teachers observed (Figure 16).

Each school's individual lesson profiles have been collated to produce a school teaching profile (figure 17). These school profiles include profiles of the maths, PE and technology lessons not included in Figures 12 to 16. The combined data suggest a quite stunning uniformity of teaching diet in the classrooms of the eight schools. Art and music teachers are employing the same activities and strategies as science, English and French teachers. All six schools, irrespective of their catchment areas and examination performances, cater overwhelmingly for students with convergent and assimilative learning styles.

Art

8	23		0	9		0	0	
38	31		36	55		67	33	
Year 7	School C		Year 7	School E		Year 8	School A	

8	8		8	0		7	13	
58	25		59	33		60	20	
Year 8	School G		Year 9	School D		Year 9	School D	

Music

12	13		14	14		0	0	
25	50		57	14		57	43	
Year 7	School C		Year 8	School A		Year 8	School B	

8	15		21	29				
46	31		29	21				
Year 9	School D		Year 9	School G				

Drama

18	29		16	26		18	37	
35	18		37	21		27	18	
Year 8	School B		Year 8	School C		Year 9	School D	

Figure 12: Creative arts lesson profiles

English

0	0		9	33		21	29	
64	36		33	25		29	21	
Year 7	School C		Year 7	School C		Year 7	School E	

10	20		0	13		8	31	
50	20		47	40		31	31	
Year 8	School A		Year 8	School A		Year 8	School E	

0	36		9	24		7	13	
45	18		48	19		47	33	
Year 8	School G		Year 9	School D		Year 9	School G	

0	18
45	36
Year 10	School B

Figure 13: English lesson profiles

Geography

0	0
50	50
Year 8	School A

0	0
64	36
Year 8	School B

0	10
50	40
Year 8	School B

15	10
50	25
Year 8	School G

0	8
50	42
Year 9	School D

0	8
54	38
Year 10	School B

History

0	17
50	33
Year 8	School A

12	18
47	23
Year 8	School G

0	14
29	57
Year 9	School D

0	0
67	33
Year 9	School E

R.E.

10	20
20	50
Year 8	School A

0	8
38	54
Year 8	School E

11	45
33	11
Year 9	School D

Core Humanities

21	29
21	29
Year 7	School C

17	33
25	25
Year 7	School E

Figure 14: Humanities lesson profiles

French

0	0
69	31

Year 7 School G

0	0
69	31

Year 8 School A

10	0
60	30

Year 8 School E

0	7
60	33

Year 9 School D

Other Languages

0	18
36	45

Year 8 School B
(Spanish)

8	0
42	50

Year 8 School C
(Urdu)

0	0
56	44

Year 9 School D
(German)

Figure 15: Modern languages lesson profiles

Science.

0	14
57	29

Year 7 School C

0	0
33	67

Year 8 School A

0	0
50	50

Year 8 School A

7	7
57	29

Year 8 School A

0	0
54	46

Year 8 School B

8	8
67	17

Year 9 School D

0	0
75	25

Year 9 School D

0	7
50	43

Year 9 School E

7	13
53	27

Year 9 School G

13	9
48	30

Year 9 School G

31	23
15	31

Year 10 School B

Figure 16: Science lesson profiles

This picture is reflected in the research of others. Newton and Harwood observed 126 lessons in three Secondary schools, and noted that 82% of them used primarily didactic methods of teaching (Newton and Harwood 1993). A similar survey of forty social studies classes indicated that 92% of them used didactic and problem-solving approaches to learning (Hacker and Carter 1987). The assertion that

> *academic studies socialize teachers into distinct subgroups that display different orientations towards knowledge and the nature of teaching*
>
> (Yaakobi and Sharan 1985)

seems largely unproved. It would appear that most of the teachers observed in the 74 lessons rely upon a restricted repertoire characterised by largely didactic teaching methods.

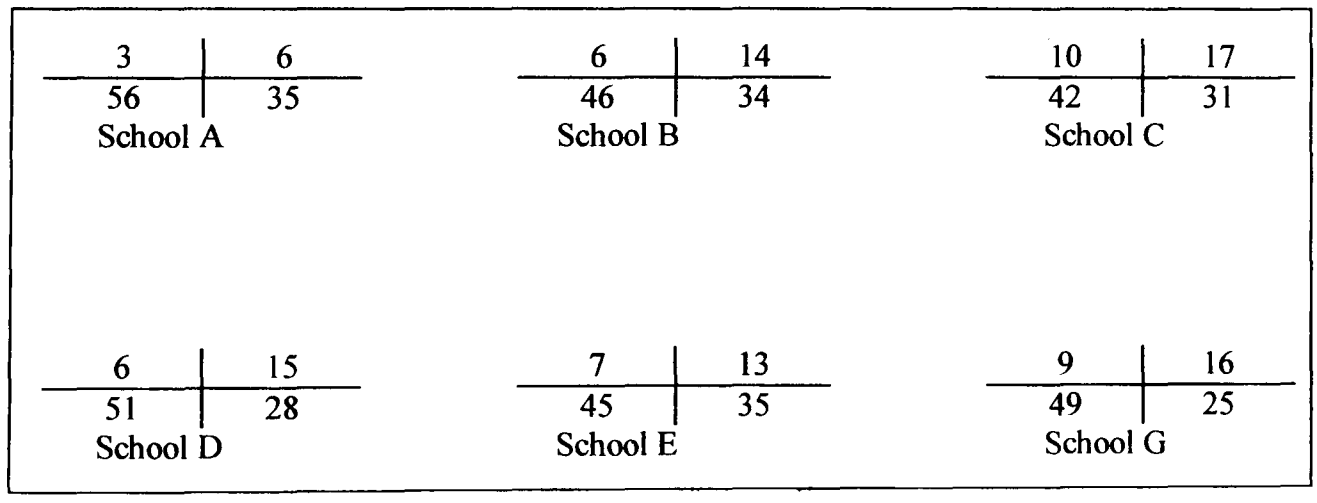


Figure 17: School Teaching Profiles

Students' Learning Preferences

The data on students' learning preferences are derived from the following sample:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	H	Totals
Y7 Male	97		68			6		171
Female	83		71			14		168
Unknown			4		63			67
Y8 Male		42	18			16		76
Female		37	26			12		75
Unknown					72			72
Y9 Male				60		29		89
Female				71		32		103
Unknown				11	24	3		38
Y10 Male						12	6	18
Female		23				16	3	42
Unknown						2		2
Y11 Male						10		10
Female						2		2
Unknown								-
TOTALS	180	102	187	142	159	154	9	933

Figure 18 shows the learning profile of the sample groups in each school. Where schools requested a breakdown by gender or by year-group, this has been shown. The smallness of the sample group in school H is because the learning style data derived were incidental to a larger study on motivation amongst a small and discrete group within the school. Figure 19 compares subject-specific group learning preferences from data collected in three of the schools.

The over-riding impression of the school learning profiles is one of uniformity. Accommodative scores vary by only three points, convergent by four, assimilative by five and divergent by seven. Subject-specific group profiles show slightly greater variance: divergent scores in particular show a twelve-point spread. Another striking feature is the difference between schools' teaching and learning profiles. While students' learning preferences still show a bias towards assimilative and convergent activities, they demonstrate a desire for a far greater proportion of accommodative and divergent activities than

their teachers are offering. Schools B, D and E, for example, offer their students a diet of four parts convergent and assimilative activities to one part accommodative and divergent: their students would prefer a 3:2 ratio. School A offers a 9:1 ratio of similar activities: their students, with an interesting conservatism compared to their peers in the three other schools, would prefer a 2:1 ratio.

Gender differences tend to be subsumed within the breadth of activities characteristic of each learning style. Where the data show marked differences, these tend to be due to local circumstances. For example, boys hugely outnumber the girls in the second Year 7 English group in School C. The girls show a preference to concentrate on written work and to get on by themselves rather than inter-relate in the learning activities favoured by accommodators and divergers. The Year 10 History students in School F are used to, and have come to expect, a range of divergent activities to help their learning.

The instrument was created with the intention of providing schools with a broadbrush picture of the teaching activities and strategies used by teachers, and of the learning preferences of their students. The derived data were intended to provide a focus for a discussion between staff and staff and, perhaps, staff and students about teaching methods. This has generally been the case. In School D, for example, the results confirmed staff's fears about the lack of opportunities provided for independent learning in its 11-16 classes, a lack which they felt partly explained their comparatively disappointing 'A' level results. The school has since provided more of these activities, including co-operative group learning, and has been provided with audit sheets in order

13	21
35	31

School A Y7 Boys

14	21
35	30

School A Y7 Girls

13	21
35	31

School A Students

16	22
35	27

School B Y8 Boys

14	23
36	27

School B Y8 Girls

16	24
31	29

School B Y10 Girls

15	23
34	28

School B Students

16	23
33	28

School D Y9 Boys

16	23
33	28

School D Y9 Girls

16	23
33	28

School D Students

15	22
34	29

School E Students

15	24
31	30

School F Y7 Students

15	28
31	26

School F Y8 Students

16	20
35	29

School H Students

Figure 18: Learning Profiles of sample groups

Art

15	21
36	28

School C Y7 Boys

15	23
34	28

School C Y7 Girls

15	22
35	28

School C Y7 Students

15	21
35	29

School E Y7 Students

English

15	23
33	29

School C Y7 Boys

15	24
33	28

School C Y7 Boys

13	25
35	27

School C Y7 Girls

13	17
42	28

School C Y7 Girls

14	23
34	29

School C Y7 Students

15	22
35	28

School C Y7 Students

15	22
35	28

School E Y7 Students

History/Humanities Core

15	20
37	28

School C Y7 Boys

13	25
32	30

School C Y7 Girls

14	22
35	29

School C Y7 Students

15	23
35	27

School E Y9 Students

15	29
33	23

School F Y10 Students

Languages

13	24
35	28

School C Y8 Boys

14	23
35	28

School C Y8 Girls

14	23
35	28

School C Y8 Students

14	23
35	27

School E Y8 Students

Figure 19: Subject-specific group learning profiles

to monitor whether such learning is taking place. The community studies department in School F has tried to integrate more accommodative and divergent activities into its curriculum, and has involved students in evaluating the activities (see Beresford 1998b). Teachers in School H have learnt how to organise inductive learning sessions using paired and groupwork techniques, and have involved staff and students in an evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching model.

The instrument has exposed the discrepancy between what the eight schools offer in terms of teaching strategies and activities, and what their students would prefer them to offer. This did not come as a surprise to many of the teachers with whom I discussed the results. Some suggested that accommodative and divergent activities were generally more enjoyable for students, and did not involve as much "hard work" as convergent and assimilative activities. Others suggested that accommodative and divergent learning processes took longer than the two others, and that they could not afford to allocate time to associated activities. In other words, convergent and assimilative activities were more time- and cost-efficient. Yet others frankly conceded that they were able to keep better control of the class during convergent and assimilative activities, a sentiment expressed in the research of others (Hacker and Carter 1987, Newton and Harwood 1993, Budge 1997). Finally, teachers have suggested that it is more difficult to assess the group work characteristic of accommodative and divergent learning than the individual work characteristic of convergent and assimilative teaching activities.

The arguments rehearsed above represent a mixture of prejudice and pragmatism. They do not provide a rationale for the limited range of strategies and activities being provided in the schools which have been the subject of this chapter. There is no reason to suggest that these schools are exceptional in terms of the limited range of activities being offered by their teachers. Where they are exceptional is in their willingness to address the issue. It is clear that where schools do not address the issue, and do not attempt to match the teaching offered more closely to their students' learning preferences, they will continue to suffer the consequences of student alienation and anomie to which the learning incongruency described by Kolb and Fielding contribute.

For effective learning to take place, teachers need to be knowledgeable about the learning repertoire of their students, and mindful of the need to both cater for and expand that repertoire. Within IQEA there are many examples of schools refining their practices in whole class teaching, in co-operative groupwork and in inductive teaching through a process of external inputs and consultancy, peer coaching and supervised practice, while at the same time developing the requisite learning skills of their students (Hopkins and Harris 2000). Powerful learning and powerful teaching require the matching of teaching to learning.

Summary

The literature review suggests that

- teachers need to provide a range of teaching strategies in order to impact upon the greatest number of students that they teach;
- students need to be taught the learning skills necessary to take advantage of teachers' repertoires;
- providing a range of teaching strategies can avoid classroom disruption and can motivate students;
- there is a predominance of didactic teaching in the Secondary sector, partly because teachers feel in greater control of the learning process.

The review of the research suggests that

- there is a uniformity of teaching approaches – largely didactic – across much of the Secondary curriculum
- students favour a greater amount of interactive and social learning than they currently receive.

Effective Learning appears to take place when

- students experience a variety of teaching approaches
- students are able to cope with different teaching styles
- students find lessons interesting
- students are taught new learning methods.

The body of this chapter appeared in Beresford 1999c.

CHAPTER 7

Orientation to Learning

If students are the producers of their own learning, then their motivation is absolutely critical.

(Levin 1994)

Previous chapters have suggested a range of strategies whereby students take some control of their own learning. We have argued that this element of control is important in giving students a sense of ownership of both how and what they learn, and that learning autonomy is both a desirable and essential element of coping with technological change. Within IQEA, we have suggested elsewhere (see, for example, Hopkins et al. 1997) that such ownership considerations are as important in the functioning of teachers as it is to that of students.

Pedagogic partnerships describe a series of arrangements in schools whereby teachers are able to learn and disseminate proven teaching practices with the help of a critical friend. In seeking to develop this particular condition in schools we have leant heavily in the project upon the work of Joyce (see, for example, Joyce and Weil 1986, Joyce et al. 1997), and have promoted the use of such staff development techniques as peer coaching and modelling. In this way we have subscribed to the view that

in a community of learners, the most important role of teacher and principal is that of head learner ..

(Barth 1996)

This willingness to become involved in development work has arisen from a number of sources. Our experience in IQEA suggests that teachers generally want to learn about and improve teaching practices, and that such a set of arrangements are easiest to arrange where supportive collegial partnerships are already part of a school's way of working. Teachers involved in developing their practice have generally enjoyed the process, and have been motivated by the time and support given by their colleagues as well as by external agencies.

This focus in a school on the personal development of its teachers, and the enabling condition of dispersed leadership which provides groups of teachers with the wherewithal to take initiatives to improve their practice, suggests that a similar orientation to learning will enhance the development of students within the school. Stated simply, students who enjoy learning and are motivated to work hard are likely to learn more effectively.

The Literature of Orientation to Learning

Unsurprisingly, those most satisfied with school are high achievers who feel motivated and esteemed for their work (Epstein and McPartland 1976). They see their teachers as humorous and caring (Shaughnessy and Kushman 1997), and enjoy lessons that are fun and allow them to use their own preferred ways of working (Jeffrey and Woods 1997). Those least satisfied with school include students who find certain subjects difficult, and feel that teachers do not help them in their difficulties. Fewer numbers like their teachers, and they

have low self-esteem as learners (Chaplain 1996a). Some have developed 'learned helplessness' in work they find hard to understand, and have internalised a view that they are no good at a particular subject or set of processes. Such attitudes are prevalent among students with learning difficulties (Galloway et al. 1995, Chaplain 1996b).

Students as young as five and six have apparently developed this concept of specific subject competence, and ascribe their success to this competence and to personal effort (which their teachers' comments confirm), rather than to all-round ability (Gipps and Tunstall 1997, Gipps and Tunstall 1998). Students' perceptions of their own ability in particular subjects appear to persist into the first year of secondary school, but decline thereafter (Keys and Fernandes 1993, Galloway et al. 1995). It has been suggested that part of this decline may be due to the poor preparation for Secondary education provided by many Primary school teachers, whose main strategy to prepare Year 6 students for Year 7 has been

> *making the work harder for [students].*
>
> (Pratt 1999)

It has also been suggested that a setting system which highlights academic differences between students will reduce student self-esteem and lead to a 'labelling subculture' (Rudduck 1994).

This decline in student self-esteem has in part been used to explain the Year 8 'dip' in student performance (Meece and Miller 1996, Rudduck and Flutter 1998) and for the decline in students' positive attitudes towards all curriculum

subjects except English in Key Stage 3 (Sutcliffe 1998, MORI/Campaign for Learning 1998, Miller et al. 1999). It has also been found that, with Year 9 students choosing their GCSE subjects,

> *perceptions of 'usefulness' in relation to future career are more important than 'liking' in influencing option decisions.*
>
> (Adey and Biddulph 2000)

This instrumental attitude to school work has led the authors to suggest that subject teachers, particularly those of non-core subjects, need to justify to their students why their subjects are part of the school curriculum. The premise that orientation to learning can be affected by students' social and economic circumstances outside school, and that "dispositions to learning" can therefore change quite quickly (Bloomer and Hodkinson 2000), suggests that such justifications may need to be revisited regularly.

It has also been suggested above that teachers can do much to modify students' attitudes towards specific curriculum subjects. They can, for example, deploy a range of teaching strategies to make their lessons more interesting. They can build an 'authentic relationship' with those they teach so that students do not equate 'doing badly' with not getting along with the subject teacher. They can emphasise task performance criteria in feedback to students, rather than concentrating solely on building (or lowering) self-esteem. There is clearly a need to

> *promote and sustain intrinsic motivation, persistence, positive emotions and social relationships in the classroom.*
>
> (Meyer and Turner 1996)

There is an abundance of research which suggests that orientation to learning is also differentiated by gender. Examination data point to the performances of boys lagging behind that of girls at GCSE, and a suggestion of a similar gap appearing at 'A' level (OFSTED/Equal Opportunities Commission 1996, Bright 1998). Various explanations have been offered for this phenomenon - that parents in the past two decades have pushed daughters to achieve more academically than parents previously, that women's traditional employment opportunities have increased while men's have contracted, and that boys remain over-confident of gaining employment regardless of the academic qualifications they acquire (or fail to acquire) (Grant 1996, James and Arnot 1998). Data on examination entry suggest that girls opt out of maths and science in post-16 education (Arnot et al. 1998).

There may also be an ethnic dimension to orientation to learning: it has been suggested that Asian students in English Secondary schools like certain subjects less than non-Asian students (Siann et al. 1996). In a study involving 800 Primary-aged students in England and France,

> *French children were more strongly positive about school, more enthusiastic about teachers, and more likely to see teaching as helpful and useful to them. French children also presented themselves as more*

highly educationally motivated and keen to do well in class.

(Osborn 1997a, Osborn 1997b)

Osborn suggested that the dampening influence of the peer subcultures in England's Primary schools was far greater than in France's.

Schools attempt a range of strategies to instil in students a more positive orientation towards learning, or to motivate students. We have already commented upon the importance of certain teacher behaviours in motivating students (Marzano et al. 1992, Morgan and Morris 1999), and upon the impact of merit systems in Year 7 in Secondary schools. Providing interesting and stimulating settings for study support, like the Leicester City football ground, has had the intended impact upon students' motivation and engagement with learning (DFEE 1997b), even though the impact upon learning outcomes is less clear (Comber 1999). Target-setting has some reported motivational effects (Perkins 1999), although concern has been expressed by students that schools are more concerned with enhancing institutional performance than with the development of the individual (Boyd and Jardine 1997, Fielding 1999a). GCSE work and assessment provide its own motivation for most students, and those who are alienated from work at this stage of their schooling are often alienated by their peers (Rudduck 1996a, Rudduck 1996b, Day 1996).

The motivating effect of groupwork has been well-charted in industry (see Katz 1964) as well as in education, and matches well with the views of those

students in IQEA schools, reported in a previous chapter, who are well-versed in groupwork techniques. Peer interaction has been used in schools to change girls' attitudes towards science (Eland et al. 1995), and to motivate Year 11 students in their GCSE studies (Osborne and Collins 1999). It has been suggested that schools need to focus upon the "motivating power of groupwork" (Kershner 1996), and move away from a view of hard work primarily as

> *independent activity, usually best carried out in silence.*
>
> (Ibid.)

Attitudes to, and performance of, homework tasks provide important indicators of students' orientation to learning. It appears that most students spend longer on homework than individual schools suggest (OFSTED 1995a), with about a third of students spending more than an hour an evening on homework tasks (MORI/Campaign for Learning 1998). Girls do more than boys, Year 11 students more than Year 7 ones (ibid.). Students are more likely to complain about the lack of rationale for some homework, the lack of clarity of some homework tasks, and staff not sticking to the homework timetable than about the concept of homework itself (Frost 1993, OFSTED 1995a, Warrington and Younger 1996, Rudduck 1996d). The propensity of many teachers to set 'finishing off' tasks (Osborn and Dawson 1995) means that students who are highly able often do less homework than their peers, because they are able to do more of the work in lessons (Miller et al. 1999).

Research into Orientation to Learning in IQEA schools

Some of our IQEA schools have expressed specific interest in their students' work orientation in terms of their attitudes towards specific subjects, towards homework and towards their rewards systems. As well as research upon each of these, this section also draws upon reports of the following:

- Attitudinal surveys of students' views on school life
- Surveys of students' views on teaching and learning
- Student evaluations of teaching styles and strategies
- Student evaluations of various curricula
- Students' views on motivation for learning
- Students' views on assessment.

As in three of the previous chapters, the various reports from which the data in the following sections are drawn are listed in Appendix 1 at the end of the book. The names of the school have been replaced by the case study number quoted in the text. All the research was undertaken between 1997 and 2000. The data have been organised under the following question headings:

1. What are the factors which determine whether students have a positive orientation to lessons?

2. Do students feel they work hard in school, and how do they know?

3. Are students sufficiently well motivated to work hard at their homework?

4. In what ways do schools effectively recognise and reward students' hard work?

1. What are the factors which determine whether students have a positive orientation to lessons?

- A Newark comprehensive school wished to follow up, with interviews, a survey of students' views on teaching and learning in the school. A sample of 60 students in Years 8 and 9 were interviewed in single-sex groups of three. In responding to a question about the features of a good lesson, about a third identified a relaxed classroom environment, which included being allowed to talk to fellow students. 28% identified enjoyment and an element of fun, and 15% an element of practical activity. About an eighth of the sample identified an element of discussion, and the same proportion highlighted good teacher explanation (3).

- A comprehensive school in south Derbyshire wanted to explore the appropriateness of different teaching and learning styles for different students. As part of the information-gathering exercise necessary to progress the project it was decided to interview 12 selected students in Year 10 about their attitudes to teaching and learning at the school. Students were interviewed alone. They were asked to identify their

favourite and least favourite lessons, and to identify the distinctive features of each. Enjoyment of the content was identified by a majority as a feature of favourite lessons, as was teacher explanation. Half the sample identified lack of understanding as the main feature of their least favourite lessons. With regard to such lessons teaching methods, lack of understanding and poor relationships with the teacher were also mentioned (5).

- A Nottingham comprehensive school wished to establish what students experienced and preferred in terms of the teaching offered at the school in Years 7 and 8. 36 students were interviewed in single-sex groups of three. Students presented a wide and varied range of features in what they perceived to be good lessons. Student engagement was clearly seen as critical, because non-engagement appeared to lead to student misbehaviour. Features contributing to engagement included an element of practical, hands-on activity, and an element of fun in a climate of good teacher-student relations. Demanding tasks were accepted if the teacher's instructions and explanation were clear. The list of features of ineffective lessons was more diffuse, but students clearly did not like lessons where there was a lot of shouting. Students were also clear on the kind of work which failed to engage them - those in the higher sets appeared to be more tolerant of what was perceived as dull teaching content and unvaried teaching methods than students in the lower sets (7).

- In a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive school, the religious studies department had been developing a more discussion-based approach to teaching the subject, and wanted to evaluate its impact upon students' views of the subject. A representative sample, chosen by staff, of 60 students across all year-groups was interviewed in groups. 97% said they enjoyed the subject, with over two-thirds citing the different teaching approach used as the main reason. 83% felt that religious studies was an important school subject, with a third saying it provided important life skills. None related its importance to career prospects (13).

- Research work undertaken in a comprehensive school in the south of Essex during the period 1995-7 revealed an element of discontent among Year 8 students, and it was decided in the Spring Term of 1998 to undertake a survey of student opinion in Years 7 and 8. A questionnaire was administered to 585 students. Among the questions asked were some relating to what type of lessons motivated students. Less than half of all students looked forward to lessons: the percentage of girls looking forward to lessons dropped dramatically in Year 8. Interest in the subject taught was important to about 90% of students. About three-quarters usually worked best when they viewed the subject as important. Other factors deemed to be important included teacher expectations relating to work, good teacher explanation of tasks and liking the teacher. Teacher praise was felt to be less important (15).

- A comprehensive school to the north of London was concerned about the preparedness of their students for work in the sixth form. A representative cross-section of 21 students, selected by the staff, was interviewed in groups. One of the questions asked related to which of the subjects they were studying they preferred, and the reasons for this. Only one student said that she enjoyed all the subjects she was studying. The largest set of responses about subject preference related to enjoying and being interested in the subject. Slightly fewer cited the relaxed atmosphere in certain lessons. About the same number identified the teaching practices in particular subjects - that they were taught well, that there was a greater range of teaching activities, that there were small teaching groups and that the work was challenging. Slightly fewer again indicated that they wished to pursue further study or a career in the subject. Finally, some liked aspects of the nature of the subject - it was practical, easy to pick up, a modern subject and the easiest option were some of the comments made (16).

- Teachers at a Nottingham girls' comprehensive school were interested whether motivated and demotivated students had different attitudes towards aspects of learning in the school. A questionnaire was administered to a sample of 99 students identified by staff as motivated, and to 98 identified as demotivated. One of the questions asked students to identify the features of a good lesson they had recently been taught. 40% of the motivated sample and 31% of the demotivated sample identified personal enjoyment as the most important quality, followed by an element

of practical work (22%/17%), fun (15%/10%) and personal interest (11%/12%) (17).

- The general studies department of a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive wanted to undertake an evaluation of the curriculum offered to students in Years 10 and 11. To this end it was decided to canvass the views of students in these two years. A total of 217 questionnaires were completed. Year 11 students enjoyed general studies slightly more than Year 10 students, who were however quite enthusiastic about the subject. Year 11 students felt more strongly than those in Year 10 that it was an important school subject, with 44% (as compared to 26%) feeling that it helped them understand current issues. A greater proportion of students in Year 10, however, felt that the subject equipped them with important life skills (24% compared to 7% in Year 11). Less than 1% of the respondents related its importance to career prospects (22).

- A comprehensive school in Mansfield canvassed the views of a representative sample of its students in 1998, and decided to repeat the exercise in 2000, for comparative purposes. A sample of 100 students chosen by the school was interviewed in mixed gender groups in 1998, and a sample of 88 students was similarly interviewed in 2000. One of the questions asked was 'what makes a good lesson?' Students gave a wider range of responses relating to pedagogy in 2000, the contents of which suggested that teachers were using a greater range of teaching strategies than in the previous year. Both genders in both years ranked a practical

element of activity in lessons as the most important element, although the percentage of boys thinking this dropped from 42% in 2000 to 22% in 1998. There was a similar shift in the proportion of boys who felt that "not too much writing" was important (20% in 1998, 2% in 2000). Interesting and exciting work, and good teaching, were deemed to be important elements in each year (27).

- A comprehensive school on the outskirts of Nottingham wanted to canvass students' views on what constituted effective teaching. A sample of 108 students from Years 7, 8 and 9 was interviewed in groups over three days. Questions were asked about favourite and least favourite lessons, and the qualities of both. Students' self-belief in their own ability was an important factor in the enjoyment of a subject for about half of the boys and about a third of the girls. This rose in Year 9 to about three-quarters of the boys and about half of the girls. Lack of such self-belief was an important factor in the attitude of Year 9 girls towards a particular subject: it was not so important to boys. The content of lessons - the range of activities, the presence of practical activities and whether lessons were interesting and fun - was a factor in the enjoyment of over half the students interviewed, and a factor in the lack of enjoyment of over 60%. A quarter of Year 7 students complained about a lack of variety in the kind of work they were asked to do, and over 40% of Year 8 students complained that the work was too academic and the teaching too didactic. The personal qualities of teachers - pleasantness, sense of humour, likeability and helpfulness - were factors in the enjoyment of about one in

five students of both genders, and in the lack of enjoyment of about 45%. These qualities, and the lack of them, were greater determinants of whether students enjoyed lessons in Year 7 than in other years, and slightly more important to girls than to boys. The memories of subjects which students brought with them to Secondary school were important elements in their attitude. About one-fifth of those interviewed liked a subject because they had always liked it, and about a tenth disliked it because they felt that they had never been good at it. This was felt by nearly a third of Year 9 girls, a surprising figure given that they had presumably opted for a large part of their curriculum (28).

- At an all-boys' school in north Hertfordshire the maths department decided to undertake by questionnaire a student evaluation of the shift away from workbooks to a more textbook-based scheme of work in Year 8. 125 questionnaires were completed and returned. Nearly all the students felt maths was an important subject. Most had an instrumental view of the subject - that it would be useful in future life and/or in future jobs. The two who felt it was not important said they wanted jobs in IT. A quarter of the sample wanted more fun and humour in lessons, with a further one in 10 requesting more games and more practical lessons. Similar responses were derived from interviewing a group of less able students, with a larger proportion wanting a greater element of fun in lessons (36, 44).

- The creative arts department at a comprehensive school on the western borders of Essex wanted to gauge the views of a representative sample of 23 students from Years 7 to 9 on art, dance, drama and music. Students were interviewed individually. They were asked what they felt they gained from creative arts. The large number of responses citing the development of subject-specific skills (for example, becoming a good actor), and not being able to identify any more general gains from studying Creative Arts, suggested that a large number of students were not clear about the *raison d'être* of creative arts in the curriculum (38).

- As part of a departmental project to monitor the quality of learning, the technology staff at a comprehensive school in Cambridge requested that a sample of 40 students be interviewed on their attitudes to the subject. This sample was drawn from Years 8, 9 and 10, and reflected the full range of ability within each year-group, according to teacher assessments. Pupils of like ability were interviewed in single-sex pairings. Two-thirds of the sample, including 18 of the twenty boys, unreservedly felt that technology was an important school subject. 42% of the sample felt that it taught life skills, with 32% regarding it as useful for future employment. A further 20% regarded the subject as unimportant because they felt that it did not relate to their intended careers. 85% of the sample, including all the boys, felt that they were reasonable or better at the subject. 90%, including all the boys, enjoyed the subject to some extent (39).

- A comprehensive school in Mansfield wanted to pursue a number of issues raised in a survey of the attitudes of students in Years 7 to 9 to teaching and learning. A representative sample of 83 students was interviewed in ability groupings. Over a third of the sample, representing students of all abilities and gender, identified both enjoyment and an element of activity as features of interesting lessons (40).

- The design and technology department in a Nottingham comprehensive school sought the views of students in Years 7 to 9 about the subject initially by questionnaire, and it was subsequently decided to explore further some of these views by interview. 56 students were interviewed in twos and threes, either in single-sex or mixed groupings. A greater proportion of students in Year 9 than in other years liked design and technology. This was presumably in part due to the fact that they had opted to do the subject. Even Year 7 students who were lukewarm about the subject admitted to enjoying making things, the main reason given by all year-groups for enjoying the subject. The majority of responses as to why students didn't like design and technology referred to teachers. Only Year 7 and Year 8 students, however, made these responses: Year 9 students complained only about some of the work, and gave a wider range of reasons why they liked the subject. Two-thirds of the sample related its importance as a school subject to its application to specific careers. Only one in eight students felt it was important in providing useful life skills (41).

- A comprehensive school on the edge of Derby was interested in evaluating the teaching of maths in the school. Students in Year 7 were interviewed on the comparisons between maths teaching at the school and at their former Primary schools, and it was decided to interview a representative sample of Year 10 students in order to compare the teaching of maths with that of other subjects in the school. Two-thirds of the students unequivocally liked maths. Girls were rather more enthusiastic than boys. Almost half of the responses relating to what students enjoyed referred specifically to the idiosyncratic way in which the subject was delivered in the school, that is through group task-setting. Only one of the seven dissenting responses referred to the method of delivery. All 18 students felt it was an important school subject, with 15 relating its importance to job prospects and 5 as contributing important life skills. Boys' and girls' attitudes were similar (42).

- The economics department in a Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive was interested in the reasons why students opted to study economics in Year 10. Eight students - three from Year 9, three studying economics in Year 10 and two in the same year not studying economics - were interviewed singly. Views of what economics was about, particularly those of students not studying the subject, were unclear. A couple of students said that they had had no information about what the GCSE course involved. The reasons given by most of the students who were going to opt, or had opted, to study the subject, were strongly instrumental in terms of future career options. The importance of economics as a school subject was

predominantly seen in terms of its contribution to a future career in business (43).

Commentary

The research findings largely confirm those related in previous chapters and in the research literature about the importance of enjoyment, engagement and the centrality of the teacher-student relationship as integral parts of students' orientations to particular lessons. Large numbers of students stressed the importance of the elements of fun, enjoyment and a relaxed learning atmosphere in 'good' lessons. Where interviews allowed a further exploration of what 'enjoyment' entails, for example in case study schools 28 and 39, the findings confirmed the research which suggested that students enjoy subjects which they feel they are "good at". Good teacher explanation, also highlighted on occasions as a feature of a 'good' lesson, appeared to be an important element for those whose self-esteem in a particular subject was already high, but absolutely critical for those whose self-esteem and orientation towards a particular subject were less secure.

Students in a number of schools highlighted the importance of an element of practical, 'hands-on' activity in 'good' lessons, and this was sometimes contrasted to lessons with too much writing. Students also confirmed their preferences, as highlighted in previous chapters, for learning strategies at which they had gained proficiency through regular practice, for example discussion (case study 13) and problem-solving (case study 42).

It was also clear from the findings that students generally exercised some form of overview of the curriculum in fixing their attitudes to the subjects offered by their schools. Where students were asked whether they felt a particular subject was important, few quoted the intrinsic interest of the subject as a factor in their responses. Answers routinely highlighted the teaching of life skills, for example the applicability of technology skills to running and repairing their future homes, or of skills that would be useful in future careers. Where certain subjects, like maths and technology, lent themselves to such attitudes, or where teachers had explained the justification for their subject's appearance in the National Curriculum (as was clearly the situation in case studies 13 and 22), students seemed more likely to engage with a subject than where such links were not so apparent, as in dance and drama, or had not been made apparent by subject teachers, as suggested above by Adey and Biddulph (and in case study 38).

2. *Do students feel they work hard in school, and how do they know?*

- A sample of twelve Year 10 students was chosen by a south Derbyshire comprehensive school in order to explore attitudes towards teaching and learning in the school. The sample was selected to represent the range of perceived effort and ability levels within the year-group. Students were interviewed singly. They were asked if they felt they worked hard in

school. Seven gave an unqualified 'yes' response, and the other five gave a qualified 'yes'. Of the six who had been identified by staff as good workers, four gave unqualified positive responses, including all three who had been identified as high performers. When asked how they knew they worked hard, students quoted a range of sources. Nine of the sample said it was their own assessment. This included all six of those identified as showing poor or variable work effort. Six quoted teacher comments, including three of the six with poor/variable work efforts. The three students with poor work efforts admitted to not working hard in the past, but all claimed for various reasons to have changed, including one after he had seen some tramps in Nottingham (5).

- In case study school 28 above, students were asked whether they felt they worked hard in school. 46% of the boys gave an unqualified 'yes', falling from 53% in Year 7 to 44% in Year 9. 77% of girls gave a similar answer, with a range from 83% in Year 7 to 72% in Year 8. 5% of the sample, all boys, gave an unqualified 'no'. When asked how they knew they worked hard, 22% (31% of the girls, 14% of the boys) cited good marks and grades, and a further 20% (25% of the girls, 16% of the boys) quoted work completion as an indicator. Only 7% of the sample (5% of the boys, 10% of the girls) said it was their own assessment. As negative indicators, 20% of the boys mentioned their own poor behaviour, including 37% of the boys in Year 7. Only 4% of the girls in all three years gave similar responses (28).

- A comprehensive school on the southern borders of Essex was interested in the work motivation of its students. A questionnaire was devised to canvass the views of selected students. A selection of 51 motivated and unmotivated students was identified by staff in Years 7 to 10. Students were not asked to identify their gender. Respondents stressed the importance of a practical element in lessons and teacher praise in motivating them to work harder. An element of fun was also identified, and students worked hard in lessons that were their personal favourites. A proportion of students worked hard in core subjects. Students in Years 7 and 8 were motivated by the commendations system. Three-quarters felt that they worked hard already, and that they would work harder if they received more praise and encouragement. A large proportion of Year 7 students said they would work harder for more commendations (31).

- A survey of students' attitudes to school life was undertaken in a comprehensive school on the southern edge of Nottingham. It was decided to follow up the survey with interviews with small groups from amongst the sample of students surveyed in Years 7 to 10. Two single-gender groups in each year group were interviewed. Students were asked to define 'working hard', and whether they did work hard. Students came up with a wide range of definitions. Talking about work with other students was mentioned by boys in every year. Girls in Years 8 to 10 highlighted good presentation and, with Year 10 boys, completing work. Students in Year 7, with Year 9 boys, mentioned concentrating; Year 9 students emphasised listening, and boys in Years 9 and 10 "getting on with work". Girls in

Years 7 and 9 said they "did their best" when working hard, boys in Year 9 did "as much as possible". Single groups mentioned not copying, learning something, behaving, working in silence, doing fun work, experiments, writing, reading and ICT, and memorising. Only boys in Years 8 and 10 gave an unqualified 'yes' in response to whether they worked hard. All other groups felt they did on occasions. Reasons for not working hard included moody teachers, boring work, too much teacher talk, easy work and too much writing (37).

- As part of its improvement programme to impact upon teaching and learning practices in the school, a comprehensive school in north Nottingham decided to interview a representative cross-section of 18 students on their views of the state of teaching and learning in the school. Students were interviewed singly. Thirteen of the 18 students interviewed felt that they worked hard in school. Four gave a qualified 'yes'; one said "not as hard as I should". Three of the four qualified responses were given by Year 10 and Year 11 students. Students were also asked how they knew they worked hard. Two pointed to the sets they were in. Five pupils quoted the marks, grades and merits they received, and a further five the comments they received from teachers. A further three always met deadlines. The remaining three relied on their own self-assessments - "I stick to things", "I usually do well", "I try my best" (45).

- A comprehensive school on the western edge of Nottingham was interested in whether their more able students felt challenged by the work

set. To this end it was decided to canvass by interview the views of a sample of 27 more able students in Year 7. They were asked if they felt they were working harder in Year 7 than they had in their Primary schools. All 27 students felt that they were. Boys emphasised the volume of work they were required to do. Girls tended to emphasise the perceived change in the circumstances in which they were working, in particular the increased pressure which the system appeared to place on them (46).

Commentary

Few students appear willing to admit categorically that they do not work hard. An overwhelming majority in our case study schools gave at least a qualified response that they were working hard. Self-assessment, including the completion of work and the meeting of deadlines set by teachers, was one method which students used to decide whether they were working hard. Awareness of teacher press, either in the form of setting tight deadlines or in the volume of work set, and student response to it was also highlighted. We suggested in Chapter 2, after Rudduck (Rudduck 1996a), that defining for students what constituted 'hard work' was an important contribution to the development of self-assessment and learning autonomy. Clearly, explicit teacher expectations of work output and completion are important elements in this contribution.

Teacher comments and praise, in the form of some form of reward in a merits system in Years 7 and 8, were also important indicators. Students in some of

the case studies suggested that they worked harder where lessons had a practical element, where there was an element of fun, where they favoured a particular subject or where it was deemed 'important' (like the core subjects), echoing from section 1 the characteristics of lessons which engaged students. This suggests that the elements of lessons which engage the interest of students are also often sufficient to motivate them to work hard.

3. Are students sufficiently well-motivated to work hard at their homework?

- A comprehensive school in southeast Essex issued a questionnaire to its 585 students in Years 7 and 8 on various aspects of school life. One of the questions related to whether students tried as hard with homework as they did with classwork. 82% of boys and 87% of girls in Year 7 felt they did "often" or "nearly always". Comparative figures for Year 8 were 73% and 80%. Boys' parents checked homework more than girls', but the drop in effort in Year 8 meant that less than half of Year 8 boys and less than a quarter of Year 8 girls routinely had their homework checked in this way. Most students felt they were getting more homework than in the previous year, but the proportion was about 10% smaller in Year 8. There was a similar drop in the proportion that felt that homework helped them improve (15).

- A girls' comprehensive school near the Nottingham ring-road wanted to explore the classroom conditions necessary for students to become

effective learners. As part of the exploratory work it was decided to issue a questionnaire to selected students on their attitudes to work. Students were selected from Years 7 to 10 according to the school's judgement as to whether they were motivated or unmotivated. 99 motivated and 98 unmotivated students completed questionnaires. One of the questions related to how much homework they did every evening. 35% of the motivated sample and 24% of the unmotivated claimed to do about an hour, with a further 43% motivated and 31% unmotivated claiming to do more. Motivated students in all years appeared to do more homework than unmotivated ones, although the gap narrowed in Year 10. Unmotivated students did considerably less homework than their motivated peers in Year 9 (17).

- As part of the enquiry into teaching and learning in case study school 45 (see section 2), the 18 students were asked how much homework they did on average every evening, and whether they thought their friends did the same or different amounts. Estimates in Years 7 to 9 generally ranged from between half an hour to 2 hours, with eight of the ten pupils claiming that their friends did about the same. Year 10 and Year 11 students found it difficult to give an average figure because they said that amounts varied from evening to evening. They did, however, provide minimum and maximum amounts. The ranges varied considerably, from one Year 10 student who did between nothing and one hour's work per night (and felt his friends generally did more) to one Year 11 girl who claimed to do between two and five hours every night (and wasn't sure about the amount

her friends did). Two of the four Year 11 students interviewed felt that they did more than their friends (45).

- In case study school 46 above, able students in Year 7 were asked how much homework they did on average every evening. 37%, equally split in number between the genders, claimed to do an hour every evening, with a further 8% claiming to do more. 41% said that they never found homework difficult, with 44% finding occasional difficulties in certain subjects (46).

- A mid-Bedfordshire upper school wanted to explore any differences in attitudes to teaching and learning in a cross-section of 11 able, average and less able students in Year 10. Students were interviewed in the three ability groups. The able group did far more homework than the other two groups. They also tended to do it alone, without the television on. The other two groups worked with the television on. The able group usually coped with homework without seeking help (47).

- A comprehensive school in a village to the south of Nottingham was concerned about the 'dip' in the academic performance of its Year 8 students. As part of its enquiry a questionnaire was issued to 139 students on their homework habits. 26% of boys and 36% of girls expected to do at least one hour's homework every evening, with a further 7% of boys and 26% of girls claiming to do more than an hour. Around 70% of both genders did homework in their own rooms, with 37% of boys and 49% of

girls having music playing, and 20% of boys and 32% of girls working with the television on. 70% of girls, and slightly fewer boys, received help from their parents (48).

- A comprehensive school in the south of Derby wanted to survey practices and expectations relating to homework. To this end questionnaires were distributed to students in Years 7 to 10. 148 completed questionnaires were returned, with a low response from Year 10 students. The amount of homework set by staff suggested an expectation on the school's part that at least an hour's homework should be done by students in each of the years surveyed. This amount was clearly not being done consistently, and what was done often appeared to have been rushed. About one in four students preferred doing homework on their own, and never asked for help. Girls seemed to get slightly more help than boys, and got their planners signed more regularly by parents. Most students had access to a separate room in which to do their homework, yet one in four admitted to working in a room with other members of the family present. Girls in particular liked to work to music, occasionally with friends, and one in four boys worked with the television on. Staff seemed to justify homework on a regular basis to students, yet one in five students still claimed that they could not see the point of much of what they were set (49).

- The head of the 6th form at an upper school in Dunstable had been developing independent learning units with various subject teachers for 'A' level and GNVQ students. He was keen to derive by interview some

baseline data on students' attitudes to learning and post-16 teaching, which could contribute to a later evaluation of the impact of these units. Six students, selected by the member of staff, were interviewed singly. One of the questions asked how many hours per week students estimated that they worked on their subjects (apart from timetabled lessons). All six students needed some time and help to work out their response to this question. Four estimated that they worked 20 or more hours a week, with a large proportion of this amount done at the weekend. One student estimated he worked ten hours, and another that she worked only three. They were also asked what motivated them to do this work. Four of the six students felt that they were motivated by a personal ambition to do well: two of these felt they had always had this ambition. Three, when prompted, agreed that their parents were very supportive, though one noted that the work he was doing was well beyond their competence in the subject. One said that he enjoyed learning. The other two appeared to need some externally-imposed motivation. One felt he needed teacher press, and was joining the navy because he recognised the need for such press in his working life. The other student was motivated by a fear of getting behind in her studies, something she felt particularly at exam times (50).

- A comprehensive school on the eastern edge of Nottingham undertook a survey by interview of the attitudes towards teaching and learning of students in Years 7 to 9 (*Report of interviews of Y7-9 students on Effective Teaching at CS28 School).* It was decided to follow up these interviews with another set, canvassing Year 8 students' learning preferences. 55

students were interviewed in single-sex or mixed groups of 2, 3 or 4. Two students were interviewed by themselves. One group of questions addressed the purposes of homework. Most students showed a sophisticated awareness of them. For example, 34% regarded it as a way of developing their independent learning skills, and 31% saw it as an opportunity to learn more. Staff confirmed that some time had been put aside in lessons to explain the rationale of setting homework. Very few students appeared to express any objection to it. Over a half of the sample preferred to do creative activities for homework. Most of those preferring research activities claimed to use the internet (51).

Commentary

The case studies above largely confirmed the impressions presented by the research literature. They suggested that girls did more homework than boys in Secondary education, that Year 7 students seemed keen to do homework and that their parents were generally supportive, took an interest and checked that their children had completed their homework. The case studies also suggested that parental interest was less active after Year 7, and that this decline in interest was possibly related to growing feelings of inadequacy in being able to offer help as a student progressed up the school. However, there was some evidence, for example in case study school 50, that parents continued to give moral support to their children working at home well into their Secondary school careers.

Most students appeared to do at least one hour's homework on average every evening throughout their Secondary careers, and motivated students, particularly those with careers in immediate prospect (like those in sixth forms) did more homework than those with less personal motivation. Those who felt they were good at particular subjects appeared prepared to do more homework on those subjects than those who were less able. The gap between amounts done by the able and less able appeared to close as public examinations approached at 16. While motivation and student self-esteem thus appear to be determinants of the level of engagement of students doing homework, the experience of case study school 51 suggested that some dialogue between teachers and their students on the rationale for setting homework did much to reduce any residual resentment felt.

There seemed to be little correlation between the motivation to do homework and the domestic setting in which it appeared to be done. Some able students in one of the schools (CS47) appeared to work on their own in silence, but doing homework in front of the television or with music playing seemed sufficiently commonplace to be done by both motivated and unmotivated students.

4. In what ways do schools effectively recognise and reward students' hard work?

- Following a survey of student views on teaching and learning at a north Nottinghamshire comprehensive school, a sample of 22 students in Years

7 to 9 selected by staff as typical of their year-groups was interviewed in order that certain issues could be further explored. The Year 9 girls in the sample were asked to comment upon their claim to work hard and to receive rewards, but not to be motivated by teachers or lessons. The girls felt they were now more mature, and were motivated by the desire to do well in the SATs and to gain qualifications to get a good job rather than by the school's merits system. They described a variety of reward systems - each subject teacher seemed to have their own - which were appreciated as a recognition of hard work. One girl admitted she showed her merits to her mum (2).

- In a north Hertfordshire boys' comprehensive school, a series of focus groups from each of years 7 to 11 was arranged to discuss students' perceptions of assessment procedures in the school. Effort grades, and the merits system linked with them, provided great motivation to Year 7 students. Older students shared a retrospective view that merits were used more sparingly after Year 7, because teacher expectations of work effort and performance had accordingly risen. Merits were still valued in Year 9, and in Year 10 were sometimes linked to a financial incentives provided by parents. Years 7 to 9 acknowledged the fairness of most effort grades, but Years 10 and 11 were less happy, particularly where their parents still took a keen interest in the grades given (and gave money as reward in response to good grades) (11).

- A comprehensive school on the northern outskirts of London decided to canvass the views of a representative sample of students in Years 7 to 9 on assessment procedures used in the school. Interviews were conducted as a series of focus group discussions, with questions acting more as cues for group discussion rather than requiring specific answers. Among the issues discussed was the place of the school's commendation system in the assessment procedures. All years recognised the granting of commendations (and referrals) as an indicator of how well they were doing. One Year 7 group saw them as recognition of quality work. In Year 7, commendations were motivators. Some Year 7 and Year 8 groups found the granting of commendations to be the most common method of assessment. However, it was also recognised that more were given in Year 7 than elsewhere. Year 9 students offered various reasons for this: teachers now expected more of them, and therefore gave less; Year 9 students took little notice of them; teachers were more "stingy" in Year 9. Students in Year 9 also mentioned 'positive referrals', but felt, along with some Year 8 students, that parents should be made aware when they were made (12).

- In the survey of Year 7 and Year 8 student opinion undertaken in case study school 15 (see above in section 1), 89% of students in Year 7 and 78% in Year 8 agreed that students were "frequently rewarded for doing well in the school". The figure for girls declined by nearly 20% in Year 8, compared to a drop of only 3% for boys. Girls preferred teacher praise more than boys. About three-quarters of all students favoured written comments, and about four out of five liked merits and stickers. Three-

quarters favoured certificates, and boys grew more enthusiastic about this type of reward in Year 8. About two-thirds of all students liked sweets as rewards in Year 7, but the proportion fell to less than a half in Year 8. About half the boys liked a letter home: girls were less enthusiastic. About four-fifths liked comments in the Comments Book, but the percentage of girls favouring this type of reward dropped by 18% in Year 8 (15).

- In the survey at case study school 37, cited above in section 2, students were asked how hard work was rewarded in the school. Students in all the year groups mentioned stars and certificates. Students in Years 7 and 8 also mentioned receiving material prizes like Mars bars. Year 7 boys mentioned letters home, and girls in Years 7 and 8 mentioned group reports which could result in out-of-school trips as rewards. Year 10 students mentioned statements, which led in the case of one Year 10 boy to financial reward from home. Girls in Year 7 and 9 and boys in Years 9 and 10 said they had received rewards in school, and the boys claimed that they were motivated by them. Year 10 girls claimed not to receive them, and were not motivated when they did. Unsolicited comments included "stars don't motivate" (Year 8 girl), "teachers give less after Year 7" (Year 8 students and Year 9 boys), "prizes are cool when they're not given in public" (Year 9 girl), "Year 7 boys get picked on by teachers" (Year 7 boy) and "you don't get rewards if you're good all the time" (Year 10 girl) (37).

Commentary

Schools' merits systems appear to be recognised by Year 7 students as rewards for hard work, and the desire to acquire merits clearly motivates them. The impact of merits is less clear after Year 7. There appears to be some recognition of their worth in Year 8, but a recognition that teachers award them less readily. This arises from a combination of the realisation in Year 8 that merits were awarded in Year 7 largely to motivate, and that teacher expectations of behaviour and work effort have risen by Year 8. By Year 9 merit systems appear to be largely redundant. Teachers appear to give merits out even more sparingly, students claim to be motivated more by the desire to do well in public examinations, and many students are embarrassed by public presentation ceremonies and overt rewards like sweets. This is not to say that students wish to avoid recognition of their work. More covert recognition, like letters home or systems peculiar to individual teachers (as in case study school 2), are still valued, particularly if domestic circumstances bring some financial recognition of the school's award. There is also some suggestion, particularly in case study school 15, that girls prefer the personal and direct bestowal of teacher praise, rather than impersonal rewards, like written communications to parents.

Summary

From the literature review it appears that

- students who achieve and have high self-esteem enjoy lessons;

- students who have difficulty with certain subjects, or find teachers unhelpful, do not like those subjects;
- students often view subjects and homework tasks in terms of their usefulness for gaining career and life skills;
- teachers need to justify the reason for studying various subjects and completing tasks to students;
- orientation to certain subjects seems to vary by gender and sometimes by race;
- teachers can improve students' orientation to learning by certain behaviours, by organising learning in different settings and by using social learning.

From the review of the research in the case study schools, it appears that

- students like lessons which are fun, have a practical element, where they are engaged and where their relations with the teacher are good;
- proficiency in a subject and in the learning strategies required, and the quality of teacher explanation, are also important factors in liking lessons;
- student orientation to lessons is also likely to be positive where students feel that future life and job skills are being taught or where the place of the subject on the curriculum has been explained;
- most students claim to work hard and assess their effort themselves or through interpreting teacher feedback;
- girls work harder than boys and do more homework;
- students work hard in lessons they enjoy;

- younger Secondary students are motivated by merit systems, but their impact wanes further up the school;
- older students still enjoy recognition of hard work, as long as it is not too public.

Using a combination of the findings from the literature and those from the case studies, students appear to learn better when

- they look forward to lessons
- they work hard in school
- they work hard at home
- they are rewarded for hard work.

CHAPTER 8

Adjustment to School

> *If a segment of the school population is not present physically or is feeling alienated or absent mentally, of what value is excellent pedagogy?*
>
> (Testerman 1996)

Previous chapters have described a range of strategies which teachers can use to impact upon student behaviour and, in so doing, improve the quality of student learning. These strategies have included some which aim to secure students' engagement and commitment to learning, for example the sustenance of an authentic relationship between teacher and student, and the opportunity for teachers and students to exchange informed views on teaching and learning strategies.

Within IQEA, we have argued that

> *if we hope pupils will value and enjoy learning, we need to be able to create a learning environment in which pupils will feel secure and valued.*
>
> (Hopkins et al. 1997:31)

Consequently, one of the classroom conditions which teachers are encouraged to address in order to make their teaching more effective is the establishment of a set of boundaries and expectations within which student learning can take place. Such boundaries and expectations create the classroom environment in which student learning can safely proceed, unhindered by disruptive and anti-social behaviour. They can also establish routines which contribute to the flow

of teaching and learning. We have argued that these parameters are more likely to be observed by students where they are the result of some form of negotiation with the students themselves, and where any resultant rules are applied consistently by teachers. This chapter suggests that student compliance to an agreed code of conduct regulating behaviour in school is a necessary condition for effective student learning to take place. Such compliance, as the introductory quote implies, involves attending school and accepting the conventions relating to work, for example handing homework in on time, as well as obeying school rules relating to social behaviour. While it is clear that

> *schools must not assume that the majority of pupils whose behaviour is compliant are actually satisfied with their experiences at school*
>
> (Campbell 1993)

we would argue that good order, in a learning community where all members are given the opportunity to contribute to the process of establishing rules of conduct, is an important condition in allowing the learning capacity of students to develop. When combined with the other conditions previously described, adjustment to school implies not just a passive compliance to a set of rules, but a positive commitment on the part of students to the structures, boundaries and conventions necessary for effective learning to take place.

Others commentators of the student voice also testify to the need for the classroom to be a safe and well-ordered place in which learning can take place. Rudduck cites security and student self-esteem as one of the "seven conditions of learning in school" (Rudduck et al 1996b). A Director of Education involved in the 'fresh start' given to a closed Secondary school in her authority suggested that resolving its behaviour problems was "one of the easier tasks to undertake" (Whatford 1998):

> *Children do not like being in an out of control situation. They want boundaries and parameters and to know with certainty that everyone will be kept within them.*
>
> (Ibid.)

OFSTED suggests that

> *where teachers insist on ... high standards of behaviour, they are more likely to obtain them.*
>
> (OFSTED 1993c)

In its advice to its inspectors, it points out that

> *the priority staff give to encourage good attendance and behaviour is a strong indicator of the steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare and safety.*
>
> (OFSTED 1999a: 76)

There is a wealth of evidence that students themselves identify the establishment of classroom order as a high priority. In the Primary sector, a

survey of sixty upper junior students suggested that their only reservation about school rules was their teachers' varying interpretations of them. They saw school rules as

> *the <u>only</u>* [author's emphasis] *barrier against extreme bullying and natural excess.*
>
> (Cullingford 1988)

A survey of 430 Primary students found that most were aware of the unacceptability of physical and verbal abuse towards others (Wragg 1995). In the Secondary sector, none of the ten main issues raised in the Keele Pupil Attitudes Survey, where students are invited to

> *write freely about their own experience of school*
>
> (Maden and Johnson 1998)

relate to school rules. In a survey of the perceptions of over 500 Scottish Secondary students of what constituted effective discipline, eight of the 21 strategies identified related to rules and teacher control in the classroom (Munn et al. 1990). A study of 119 emotionally disturbed children in four English Secondary schools concluded that students with low self-esteem wanted teachers to create a controlled and structured classroom environment (Witter 1988).

This desire of students for a controlled and well-ordered environment in which to learn is not restricted to English schools. 28 senior students in a high school study in south-west USA regarded their school as a safe and orderly place, and attributed their academic success, *inter alia*, to their personal

orientation to the rules and expectations that were set (Hord 1997). The massive opinion survey undertaken in Chicago schools in the mid-90s indicated that students wanted more concern to be shown by the authorities over safety and order, especially in schools with an African-American ethnic mix (Consortium on Chicago School Research 1996). A study of 45 newcomers to an Australian Secondary school found that, in seeking elements of stability in their acculturation in a strange and often confusing environment, nearly all made

> *a very conscious effort to conform to all school rules ... and behaved in exemplary fashion in class.*
>
> (Elliott and Punch 1991)

It appears that most schools respond to students' desire for a well-regulated learning environment. Various surveys of student feelings about school indicate high levels of engagement and satisfaction. 79% of the 4245 Secondary students questioned in a recent MORI poll "enjoyed learning new things", with 50% enjoying learning at school. Only 16%, in contrast, found learning at school unenjoyable (MORI/Campaign For Learning 1998). A survey of student attitudes in 80 Scottish Primary and Secondary schools found that

> *pupils generally like school. Bullying is not a big problem because most schools make it a priority to deal with it, and pupils feel safe.*
>
> (Boyd and Jardine 1997)

Some writers have identified variations in the degree of satisfaction shown by different groups of school students. A survey of 4266 Elementary and Secondary school students in Maryland suggested that there was

> *a consistent pattern of decreasing satisfaction with school life over time.*
>
> (Epstein and McPartland 1976)

A longitudinal study of 750 Primary-aged students in English schools concluded that boys were more inclined than girls to break school rules (Davies and Brember 1999). This attitudinal difference between the genders confirms one of the results of a survey of the perceptions of 4863 students of the quality of life in English Primary schools, where girls appeared to be more satisfied than boys with their life in school (Ainley and Bourke 1992). A survey of 985 Secondary students further endorsed this view (Siann et al. 1996).

Previous chapters have highlighted particular issues related to each of the conditions which may lead to student disengagement from learning and to dissatisfaction with school, for example, students not knowing how well they are doing, and not knowing what to do in order to improve; students being unable to take full advantage of independent learning opportunities; students being unable to sustain an authentic relationship with a teacher. With regard to adjusting to school, the task appears to be much easier when students are enabled to have some say about the environment in which they learn. For example, in the Maryland survey cited above, the authors concluded that

> *control over one's environment is a stronger associate of satisfaction with school than is either self-esteem or self-reliance.*
>
> (Epstein and McPartland 1976)

Participation by students in their learning is deemed of such importance in Swedish schools that every lesson has to begin with a discussion between teacher and students about how the lesson is to be conducted (Beresford 1999a). Every three years the national education agency, the *skolverket*, formally canvasses the views of a representative sample of over 1500 students on their views on how Swedish schools are run, and uses these views, along with those of teachers and parents, to inform future policy (Swedish National Agency for Education 1997). In the Netherlands, even kindergarten teachers are encouraged to negotiate targets related to classroom behaviour with their students (Castelijns 1996).

In English schools, where the culture of student participation in rule making is less developed, some negotiation is still possible. Discussion of students' problems involve, in the best schools, some discussion with the students themselves:

> *when they have a particular difficult problem with a student, teachers in collaborative schools seek help more widely, seek to identify causes and then to solve problems; in schools where teachers are more isolated, problems invariably means* [sic] *behaviour problems, and punishment is seen as the solution.*
>
> (Watkins 1996)

Successful interventions to combat disruptive behaviour, bullying and truancy have involved negotiated learning with peer groups rather than the treatment of individuals as social deviants or students with special educational needs (Elliott 1997, Hickey and Fitzclarence 1999, Christie et al. 1999). It has been suggested that the key to securing the engagement of excluded students is to provide them, along with all other students, with the chance to

> *voice their views regarding their preferred learning style, and the teaching style that would best suit and serve their needs.*
>
> (De Pear 1997)

Unsuccessful interventions, like some of the government-sponsored projects to combat truancy in the late 1990s, have given special treatment to target groups and individuals. This strategy proved controversial and counter-productive within the communities it was intended to benefit, led one of its critics to suggest that non-engagement should be treated as an ongoing feature of institutional life and that, accepting such a view,

> *the keys to school improvement are context-specific internal processes particular to each school.*
>
> (Cockett 1996)

Strategies which use the setting of work as a sanction (Cullingford 1987), or link comments about work performance and behaviour (Homerton-Schools Research Circle 1997), are also resented by students, and consequently may contribute to student disengagement from learning and school.

The development of a close working partnership between schools and parents has been identified by writers in a number of countries as an important strategy in sustaining the engagement of students to their schools. In England, various studies have testified to the importance of involving parents in the education of their children as a factor in consolidating student engagement to school and in improving students' academic performance (see, for example Keys and Fernandes 1993, Harris and Russ 1995, Elliott 1997). Elsewhere, a longitudinal study recording the attitudes towards school of 57 Canadian students concluded that

> *the students are well prepared for classroom learning by the home environment.*
>
> (Coleman and Collinge 1998)

Engaged students are more likely than disengaged students to do homework with their parents, to talk about school to their parents and to discuss career plans with them (Ibid.). A survey of student opinion in 316 Chicago schools showed that there were lower rates of truancy in high schools where students reported that

> *their parents talk with them about school, encourage them to work hard, and monitor their homework.*
>
> (Consortium on Chicago School Research 1996)

Research into Adjustment to School in IQEA Schools

Teachers in IQEA schools have been interested in the extent to which the school engages its students, the factors which engage them and features of school life that they dislike. Research has also been commissioned involving students identified as disruptive or demotivated, and schools have looked for differences in attitudes to school and school rules between these identified students and the other students in the school. There has been less interest shown in parental support given to students, possibly because teachers feel they can exercise less control over this aspect of students' learning.

Research data relating to students' adjustment to school have also been drawn from projects with the following foci:

- Students' views on teaching and learning in their schools
- Follow-up interviews after surveys of students' views on their schools
- Audits of teaching strategies used in schools
- Students' attitudes and orientation towards work.

The reports from which data are drawn are listed in Appendix 1. Reference to reports is by case study number. All the research took place from 1997 onwards. Data from these reports are organised under the following headings:

1. How much do students like school, and what is it they like most?

2. What do they dislike most about school?

3. Do students feel that the behaviour codes operating in their schools are fair, and do they feel that they are enforced fairly?

4. Why do students contravene behaviour codes?

1. ***How much do students like school, and what is it they like most?***
2. ***What do they dislike most about school?***

- A comprehensive school to the northwest of Nottingham wanted to explore students' views on the incidence of independent learning opportunities in the curriculum it offered. The sample of 101 students was selected by staff as representative of the ability range across Years 7 to 9. Year 7 students enjoyed the novelty of secondary school - the different teaching approaches, new and different subjects, the chance to make new friends. By the end of their first year, the students were beginning to discriminate between subjects they liked and disliked, although this did not seem to be on the basis of whether or not they got on with the subject teacher. Surprisingly (compared to students of a similar age questioned in other IQEA schools), Year 7s made no mention of the facilities offered by the school. By Year 8, much of the novelty had worn off, and students valued school as a meeting place, particularly with friends whom they did not see after school and only at weekends. Homework had become an

issue, with nearly a half complaining about the amount. The reason may have been that the amount set contrasted sharply with the amount set in Year 7 (where clearly it was not such an issue), or that Year 8 students felt that they were being kept away from their newly-made friends by the amount of work they had to do at home. Year 9 students continued to value school as a meeting place. Issues of fairness and equity in both their own lives and those of others became important, hence not being allowed out of school at dinnertime was resented, as were the perceived unreasonableness of some school rules and some teachers (1).

- A comprehensive school in south Derbyshire wanted to canvass the views of a representative sample of students on their working habits. Twelve Year 10 students, eight boys and four girls, were selected for interview by the school on the basis of ability and perceived work effort. Students were interviewed alone. Only one of the students unequivocally disliked school, one with low ability and poor work effort. Equal numbers quoted meeting friends and some lessons as the features they enjoyed the most (5).

- A girls' comprehensive school in the centre of Nottingham decided to question students on their attitudes and orientation towards work. 197 selected students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 were issued with questionnaires. One group from each year was selected by staff as appearing motivated in their work, another because of their perceived lack of motivation. Questionnaires were coded according to the categorisation of the recipient student. With the exception of Year 8, those students who were perceived

as being motivated liked school more than those who were not. Satisfaction with school showed a marked decline amongst unmotivated students in Year 9, which continued into Year 10. While the social function of school as a meeting place for friends figured largely for both sets of students, this function was considerably more important for motivated students. Similarly, motivated students seemed more appreciative than their unmotivated peers of the school's role in educating them and equipping them for their future careers. In contrast, nearly one in five of the unmotivated students in Year 9 claimed to be bored (17).

- A comprehensive school in a village to the south of Nottingham wished to canvass the views of students in Key Stage 3 on their perceptions of good practice in teaching. 59 students representative of Years 7 to 9 were interviewed. Two-thirds of both genders interviewed claimed to like school unequivocally. The majority were in Years 7 and 8. Year 7 students tended to be very enthusiastic about the novelty of Secondary school, particularly about being taught separate subjects by different teachers. Year 8 students retained a positive outlook, although they were less inclined to identify what they enjoyed most. Year 9 students had started to make firm friendships, and had become more settled into the routines of the school, hence their stress upon social relationships. They had clearly developed entrenched orientations towards certain subjects and teachers (26).

- An upper school in Mansfield commissioned interviews in 1998 and 2000 to compare students' views on effective teaching in the school. The school wanted to gauge differences in student attitudes over the period in which the school had been a member of Nottinghamshire IQEA. Students from Year 9 to the sixth form were interviewed, with a few exceptions, in mixed gender groups of three. The 2000 sample of 88 students was smaller than the 1998 sample of 100, and was comparatively under-represented in Years 11 and the sixth form. More Year 10 girls were interviewed in 2000, and less Year 10 boys. The sixth form sample for 2000 included Year 14 students. Well over half the 2000 sample unequivocally liked school, compared to just over a third of both genders in 1998. About a quarter of the boys and one in seven of the girls interviewed in 2000 did not like the school. This compared to about one in four of each gender in 1998. In 1998 these were concentrated in Year 9. In 2000 they were concentrated in Year 10 (the previous sample's Year 9). The Year 9 cohort in 2000 was more enthusiastic about the novelty of their new school, in particular the ICT facilities available. Girls in 2000 still valued the social side of school life, including getting on with teachers; boys still seemed more enthusiastic about the curriculum on offer. The percentage of boys disliking specific teachers had declined in 2000; for girls it had risen (27).

- A comprehensive school on the eastern edge of Nottingham wanted to find out students' views on what constituted effective teaching. The sample of 108 students was selected by staff to represent the ability profile in each of

the years 7 to 9. Around two-thirds of the students seemed comparatively happy about school, equally divided between the genders. Boys' happiness dropped away dramatically from 90% in Year 7 to 58% in Year 8, stabilising in Year 9. Three-quarters of Year 7 girls were comparatively happy about school, but this fell to a half in Year 8, rising to about three-quarters again in Year 9. The boys were slightly more enthusiastic about school than the girls, giving an unqualified 'yes' response more consistently. Year 8 students showed the lowest level of satisfaction with their lot. The social function of school, as a meeting-place with friends, grew in importance from Year 7 through to Year 9, as the levels of satisfaction with lessons and activities declined, particularly between Years 7 and 8. There was some revival in interest in lessons in Year 9, presumably because students had some say in the subject options they were following. Girls in Year 8 seemed to have more hardened attitudes towards all school subjects than other students interviewed - 39% quoted some lessons as the reason they liked school, while 61% quoted some lessons as the reason they didn't. Certain teachers, facilities and extra-curricular activities were highlighted as factors contributing to Year 7's happiness, but these fell away in importance as their novelty presumably dropped off. Boys in particular became disillusioned with some teachers in Year 8, while girls were twice as disillusioned as boys in Years 7 and 9. One in five of the students interviewed did not get on well with some teachers (28).

- A comprehensive school on the southern edge of Nottingham wished to follow up a survey of students' views on the school with more detailed interviews. Students from each of Years 7 to 10 were interviewed in single-gender groups of three. The survey had suggested that, generally speaking, students in the school were less enthusiastic about what happened in their school than students in other Nottingham schools. When asked, in interview, whether they liked school, most students were non-committal in their views, claiming that school was "all right" or that they liked school "sometimes". Five of the six students who gave an unequivocal 'yes' were girls in Year 7 and in Year 9. Three of the five who gave an unqualified 'no' response were girls, all in Year 10. "Some subjects" were quoted across the year groups as the main reason for liking school. Other reasons quoted were the social function of school, the variety of lessons, aspects of learning like writing, and the school food. Reasons for disliking school were "boring lessons", the lack of justice in teachers administering group punishments (quoted by all three Year 10 girls), student misbehaviour, teachers shouting, and "writing" (37).

- Eighteen students selected as representative of the school's population by staff of an inner-city school in the Nottinghamshire IQEA Project were asked whether they liked school. They were generally very complimentary. Only one student gave a qualified response: her complaint related to the amount of writing in many of the lessons. Year 7 students were excited by the novelty of Secondary school, and favourable comments were made by pupils about PE lessons, all lessons, the use of

the canteen and the choice and rotation of first access to the lunchtime meals around the school year groups. Year 8 pupils enjoyed some lessons and the after-school clubs on offer. For Year 9 students' social relationships in and out of school were important, and students talked about "helpful and friendly teachers" and the atmosphere of the school, as well as retaining an enthusiasm about particular lessons. The friendly atmosphere was also highlighted by Year 10 students. One also said it was fun at school. The quality of teaching was again mentioned. The positive comments about good teaching and a friendly atmosphere created in part by friendly teachers persisted into Year 11 (45).

- A comprehensive school on the northwest edge of Nottingham was particularly interested in whether their more able students felt challenged. To this end it was decided to canvass the views of a sample of 27 more able students in Year 7. 85% of the sample said they enjoyed school. Nearly half said they enjoyed specific subjects, and slightly less, in particular the girls, said they most enjoyed meeting friends (46).

Commentary

Most of the students in the case studies schools appear to enjoy school. There is some evidence for the unsurprising finding that students who are able and motivated enjoy school more than the less able and unmotivated. It would appear, from the case studies above, that very few students cite school rules and regulations as factors in their orientation and adjustment to school. Where

they are mentioned, it is their interpretation by teachers rather than their existence which is questioned. The students in case study schools 1 and 37 complained about the indiscriminate and inconsistent nature of the application of various rules. In a similar vein, students in some of the schools complained about disruptive students, where they felt that the application of school rules had not been sufficiently rigorous.

The evidence from the case studies schools largely confirms the findings in the work of Rudduck and her colleagues (Rudduck et al. 1996c, Rudduck and Flutter 1998), that students at different stages in their secondary education like school for different reasons. Students in Year 7 in the case study schools (and in Year 9 in the Upper School) appear to like the novelty of their new school - the facilities, being taught by a range of teachers, new subjects, meeting new friends. Where the data above also suggests the existence of a 'Year 8 dip', our own evidence suggests that students' engagement to their school is determined by a hardening of attitudes towards school subjects in terms of those liked and those not liked, rather than by a perceived decline in status (Rudduck and Flutter 1998): in case study school 1, for example, such attitudes seemed to be formulating by the end of Year 7. Friendships rapidly become an important factor cementing student and school, and these sometimes affect attitudes towards elements of the curriculum which students perceive as preventing friendships from developing, for example homework in case study school 1. In Years 9 to 11, friendships appear to remain important and, because students have a considerable say in the curriculum for which

they opt, subjects are again mentioned as elements of school life that are enjoyed.

While our own research endorses the view that students' attendance at and enjoyment of school are determined by a range of factors, the findings from case study school 27 do suggest that a concerted effort to improve teaching and learning can improve students' orientation towards school. The comparative lack of student comment on the importance of an ordered learning environment as a factor in their enjoyment of school suggests that it is a constituent part which is largely taken for granted by them.

3. Do students feel that the behaviour codes operating in their schools are fair, and do they feel that they are enforced fairly?

- In CS5 School above, students were asked what they would change about the school, particularly to enable them to learn more easily. Two or more students suggested better methods of classroom control, greater control of bullying, less homework, a 'fine-weather' uniform and opportunities to catch up on work missed (5).

- In case study school 37 above, students were asked to suggest ways in which the running of the school could be improved. A range of organisational changes was suggested, but none won support from more than one student. Teachers shouting less, showing a greater sense of humour and providing an element of fun found some support. Individual

students advocated changes in various aspects of students' behaviour around the school (37).

- A comprehensive school in Cambridge was concerned about classroom disruption caused by a minority of students. Fifteen students from Years 8 to 10, fourteen of them boys, were identified by the school as disruptive and were interviewed, to seek their views on rules and boundaries set in the school. The sample, on average, was able to recall three of the six rules of classroom conduct. With one or two reservations about those relating to eating and drinking, the rules were generally felt to be "a good idea". One Year 10 suggested there should be more rules. A number of students said they would welcome rules that were negotiated between themselves and teachers (52).

- A comprehensive school just off the Nottingham ring-road was concerned about classroom disruption. Twelve students from Years 7 to 11, seven boys and five girls, were identified by the school as being disruptive in the classroom. It was felt that their views would be useful in formulating a definition of disruptive behaviour in the classroom, and in developing teacher strategies to combat such behaviour. They were interviewed singly. One of the questions asked them to identify rules from the school's Code of Conduct. Three pupils did not know of the existence of a Code of Conduct. Four were unable to quote any of the rules. The remaining five were able to identify a number. When asked what they felt about the rules, six said they would conform to some or all of the code if it was rigorously

enforced. The remainder were less definite. One boy said that students only got attention when they broke the rules, suggesting that fewer rules would cause less disruption. Another said that only a few of the rules were any use. Yet another felt it was difficult to stick to the rules in a "boring" lesson. One boy said nobody took any notice of them. A girl said that the code's rationale needed explaining (53).

- Staff at a comprehensive school on the northwest borders of Nottinghamshire had recently introduced a set of specifications which students were required to meet in order to be ready for lessons. The specifications related to the provision of equipment, appearance, punctuality and behaviour at the start of lessons. The scheme was supported by a system of rewards and sanctions. As part of the evaluation of the scheme, entitled *Equipped for Learning*, a small representative sample of nine students, selected by staff from Years 7 to 9, were interviewed for their views. Most students were able to relate the rudiments of the scheme. Equipment and uniform were the most readily identified headings. Boys were better able to recall the headings than girls. Girls received more reward certificates than boys, boys more orange sanction slips than girls, mainly for equipment transgressions. Most students felt more prepared for lessons as a result of the scheme. The importance of equipment checks before leaving home for school had subsequently grown. Fear of tellings-off was generally a greater motivator than the rewards offered. Most students felt that the scheme was a good idea, and had had a positive effect upon other students. There was some

lack of consistency reported on some teachers' application of the scheme. There was an almost equal split on whether the scheme had improved lessons - some felt that teaching time had been increased because students spent less time obtaining equipment, others felt that teaching time had been reduced because of the bureaucratic nature of the scheme. Most felt that the scheme should continue, with the criteria unchanged (54).

- A comprehensive school in a north Nottinghamshire town was concerned about under-achievement and disaffection amongst a group of Year 10 students. Twenty of these students, eleven boys and nine girls, were interviewed singly about their attitudes to school and work. One of the questions asked about the rationale for, and fairness of, school rules. Nearly three-quarters of the sample regarded school rules as necessary to retain order, and to avoid "disruption", "hurt" and "chaos". A further two boys and two girls saw rules as helping to provide a decent working environment. Two others recognised the educational purpose of having rules - to teach self-control, and respect for others. Only two expressed negative views about their purpose - one boy felt that they were intended to impose conformity upon students, and another felt they represented a "deprivation of rights", causing a "lack of personal expression". Two boys and a girl were unable to identify any rules with which they disagreed. Students' complaints about some rules were vociferous, but there was no single issue raised by more than three students in the sample (55).

- A comprehensive school in a village to the east of Nottingham had its own Learning Enhancement Project. As part of this project, it was decided to interview selected students in Year 10 on classroom order and school rules. The 27 students were chosen because each showed some degree of disruptive behaviour at times. Students were interviewed singly, except for one pair of girls. Students were asked if they felt that the Classroom Code of Conduct, as well as other rules relating to behaviour in the school, were reasonable. All the students felt that the classroom code was reasonable. One boy said it was a good reminder of acceptable behaviour in the classroom, another that it was for the students' benefit. A further two students felt it helped learning. The only critical comment was from a girl, who felt that staff's inconsistency in enforcing the dress code in class led to bad feeling, and affected relations with teachers who did enforce the code. Most of the slight reservations expressed about school rules referred to the dress code. Three students, however, felt that the dress code in the school was better than at some other schools. One even conceded it was important for the school's image in the community. Lunchtime afforded about half a dozen students some problems. Four wanted to go to into the village, although one of these understood why she wasn't allowed to go. One boy complained about the lack of anything to do in school at lunchtimes, and the lack of privacy of the student areas (56).

Commentary

The striking finding from the case studies above is that even those students identified as disruptive by their teachers generally saw the point of having

school rules, and were accepting of most of them. The disaffected Year 10 students in case study schools 52, 55 and 56 expressed complaints about individual rules, and the inconsistency within the school of applying some of them, but they were clearly not averse to a set of regulations giving some sense of order to the communities of which they were a part. Students who were not identified as disruptive had similar criticisms of individual rules: their complaints about enforcement often echoed those reported in the last section, that the existing rules needed to be enforced more rigorously against those disrupting school life.

The point has been made forcibly elsewhere (Hopkins et al. 1997) that rules are more likely to be complied with when students have some say in their formulation. The lack of student knowledge of classroom and school rules in some of the case study schools, for example case study school 53, suggested that students in some schools had little say. However, the very purpose of some of the research reported in some of the case studies above - in seeking students' views on various rules already in existence - suggested that some schools recognised the value of some level of student participation in contributing to such a process of formulation and review.

4. *Why do students contravene behaviour codes?*

- In a village comprehensive school in the north of Nottinghamshire, staff wished to follow up a survey of students' views with more formal interviews, to explore in greater detail some of the issues raised. Year 9 girls had claimed not to see the point of many school rules, and the four

who were selected by staff as typical of the year-group were asked to elaborate on this. The discussion focused very quickly upon the dress regulations in force in the school. Students felt that they were inconsistently enforced, even within the same lesson. They also complained that the system of handing out slips meant that they were told off twice, once by the teacher administering the slip and again by their form tutors. The students' comments suggested that contravening dress regulations was seen as a safe form of rebellion. So, for example, if the school had asked for shirts to be worn outside of skirts and trousers, the girls claimed that many students would wear them tucked in. It was clear that enforcing the regulations took up a considerable amount of teacher time (2).

- In the case study upper school 27 above, students were asked in 1998 and again in 2000 whether they behaved differently in what they regarded as good lessons. Students continued to feel in 2000 that they were more on-task when the lesson was good. The percentage of boys who felt that they worked and concentrated better in good lessons rose by some twenty points, to 54%, between the two surveys. Sixth form students were at pains to point out that they had no bad lessons (27).

- A Cambridge city comprehensive decided to canvass the views of selected students on disruptive behaviour in the school. Staff decided to collect data from students who exhibited low and medium levels of disruptive behaviour. 25 boys and 26 girls from Years 7 to 11 who met these criteria

were identified. Single-sex groups in each year-group were interviewed. Students were asked if they ever misbehaved. 61% of students identified as low-level disrupters, and 76% identified as medium level, admitted to misbehaviour. 64% were boys, 73% were girls. The non-tentative nature of most of the responses of students outside of Year 7, and indeed the glee which often accompanied a 'yes' response, suggested a culture amongst these low- and medium- level disrupters where behaviour disapproved of by teachers was an everyday and even welcome occurrence. The Year 7 students interviewed had only been in school for a few weeks, and were clearly still finding their feet. It was a culture to which as many girls contributed as boys, and one which appeared to become established some time in Years 7 or 8. Students were asked why they misbehaved. Only 4% of students failed to provide a rationale for student misbehaviour. Boredom as a cause of triggering misbehaviour was quoted by almost equal numbers of girls and boys, and constituted 25% of the responses. Students' comments suggested that particular styles of teaching rather than the difficulty of the work were the main causes of student boredom. Girls deemed to be low-level disrupters clearly reacted more than boys to individual attempts by teachers to retain order, and seemed more likely to personalise such criticism in terms of teachers' attitudes towards them as individuals. This personalisation of teacher criticism started in Year 8, and persisted through to Year 11. Boys, on the other hand, quoted the specific shortcomings of individual teachers in keeping order in class, and were slightly less inclined than girls to take teacher criticism personally. Students were also asked what they did when they misbehaved. Talking

constituted 35% of misbehaviours admitted, with more or less equal amounts quoted by boys and girls. Talking seemed to predominate from Year 9 onwards. Verbal abuse made up about 28% of misbehaviours, was indulged in equally by boys and girls, and was concentrated mainly in Years 8 to 10. Boys were more likely than girls to throw things and to indulge in playfighting. These more physical manifestations of misbehaviour were more common in Years 7 and 8. The more passive forms of misbehaviour, not listening or laughing in lessons, were indulged in by those perceived by teachers to be low-level disrupters. Boys admitted to a wider range of misbehaviours (55% of all responses) compared to girls (45% of all responses). Finally, students were asked to identify the types of misbehaviour they most commonly observed, and to suggest causes for them. Verbal abuse to others constituted 48% of the identified misbehaviours in the school. Girls seemed more sensitive to the extent of student-student abuse in the school than boys. Physical acts of misbehaviour made up 43% of the total. Talking in class, though admitted to by a large number of students interviewed, clearly did not rate among the leading types of misbehaviour observed by them in school. The nature of teacher-student relations in the school constituted 60% of the identified causes of student misbehaviour in the school. A further 13% were related to pedagogic practices. Hence nearly three-quarters of the causes of misbehaviour in the school were associated by students with the classroom behaviours of teachers. Boys in all year-groups were more inclined than girls to identify these classroom issues (29).

- In case study school 37 above, students were asked to define bad behaviour. "Messing around" was identified by every group as a feature of bad behaviour. The following were also mentioned: not working (5 groups), shouting/distracting others (4), disobeying/ignoring teachers (3), bullying (3), talking (3), not concentrating (2), rowing with/being rude to teachers (2) and swearing (1). Students were also asked how often they misbehaved, and the reasons for their misbehaviour. Only boys in Years 8 and 9 said that they never misbehaved. Year 7 boys said they "rarely misbehaved". All the girls, along with Year 10 boys, admitted to some degree of misbehaviour. Girls in Year 8 and 9 admitted to talking in class. Other students admitted to misbehaving when they were with certain students, or in reaction to teachers shouting, or when the work was boring. A Year 10 girl misbehaved when she didn't receive help that she had requested from a teacher. One Year 7 boy admitted to "getting a buzz" when misbehaving in the class of a teacher he didn't like (37).

- In case study school 52 above, the 15 students were each asked if they ever misbehaved in class, and the reasons for any misbehaviour. All fifteen students admitted to causing some classroom disruption. Seven gave an unqualified 'yes'. A further seven admitted to occasional disruptive behaviour. The reasons given by the students for their own misbehaviour in class were varied, but fell largely into three categories. One group of students saw the reason for their misbehaviour as lying in their own personalities. Two boys described themselves as "hyperactive". Two other students cited the importance of the mood they were in when

they came to school, although they also quoted other factors. In the same vein, two students thought that "messing around" in class was fun. One of these admitted to enjoying "winding up" student teachers, but both expressed some concern about disruptive behaviour "messing up" their education. Another group of students firmly placed the blame for their disruptive behaviour on other students. One sat next to students who distracted him from his work. Two claimed to be picked on. The third group, the largest, blamed a variety of factors for their behaviour, and suggested that these factors could vary from lesson to lesson. Many of them referred to "boring work". This classification covered work not fully understood, work that entailed a lot of writing and work that had no practical, 'hands-on' element. "Boring" thus related largely to the subject material being taught, but also sometimes to the way it was taught. The relationship with a teacher was also an important factor in determining students' classroom behaviour. Students were also asked what they thought caused disruption in lessons, and what kind of students disrupted. About half of the students said "boring" lessons were the main cause of classroom disruption. Other causes quoted were supply teachers and women teachers, who were treated badly. Slightly less than half the students mentioned the personalities of those disrupting lessons. "Image" was referred to on a number of occasions. Two Year 8 students felt that some students misbehaved because they thought it was "a laugh". A Year 10 student characterised classrooms as "geeks at the front, workers and talkers in the middle and disrupters at the back". Disruption was seen primarily as a male issue in the school. Nearly all the students interviewed

said that it was mostly boys who disrupted lessons. One said it was "all boys". Only two suggested that girls disrupted as much as boys. In each year the disruptive students seemed to be identifiable members of a group which met socially outside of school. Two Year 8 students suggested that most of the group in their year had been to the same Primary school (52).

- In case study school 53, the 12 students were asked if they ever misbehaved, and what made them misbehave. All twelve students conceded that they misbehaved at least part of the time. The reasons given by the students for their own misbehaviour in class were varied. One student saw the reason for his misbehaviour as lying in his personality. He openly admitted that he misbehaved in class to make people laugh, and to gain attention. He had done so in his Primary school, but had not been told off so much there as he was at his present school. Another group of students firmly placed the blame for their disruptive behaviour on other pupils. One girl tried hard not to misbehave, but claimed that some students didn't like her, and picked on her. She admitted to being hyperactive, but felt that she had been stereotyped by teachers. Another girl claimed similar treatment from her peers, and when she reacted by swearing at them she got told off by the teachers. Four boys joined in classroom disruption "because everyone else does", and claimed to be led or "swept along" by others. The third group blamed a variety of factors for their behaviour, and suggested that these factors could vary from lesson to lesson. One girl shouted out in lessons where she had to wait "too long" for the teacher's attention. Another girl didn't like some of the teachers.

and "the way some material is repeated". She got bored, and disruptive. One boy quoted a lack of teacher explanation in some lessons, causing him to seek help from friends and being told off for talking. The students were also asked what they thought caused classroom disruption, and what kinds of students caused disruption. Only one cited the personality of those disrupting as the prime cause, suggesting that students showing off to their friends were the main culprits. The others suggested a variety of causes. The characters and personalities of the teachers were mentioned by a number. One boy suggested that it was only the teachers that were not liked who experienced disruption. These were teachers who were "grubby" or "crusty" (local terms for "not nice"). Their manner was abrupt. Some wore "silly clothes" or "lots of make-up". Two students complained that some teachers did not explain adequately during difficult lessons. Two said that the teachers in the school were not strict enough, a third that many could not cope adequately with disruption. One girl said disruption was caused when teachers acted unfairly, another when a particular teacher was abusive towards her. Another factor frequently mentioned was the nature of classwork. Work was often described as "boring" or "unexciting". One girl quoted a series of lessons where students deemed to be disruptive by the teacher were made to copy from a textbook while the rest of the class did "more interesting work". "Copying out" was mentioned disparagingly by a number of students. The organisational arrangements in some lessons were also criticised. Two boys mentioned time left over before the ends of lessons, when there was nothing to do. Another boy suggested that shouting as a method of

keeping order only worsened a disruptive situation. While the cause of disruption was not generally seen as an issue relating to the 'images' of disruptive students, it was conceded by some that those concerned with their images were often the main culprits. One boy cited students "who think they are big". Another labelled them the "class dummies". Two girls and one boy admitted that it was largely their friends who caused the disruption. One boy suggested it was those not wanting to work. Otherwise, it was students reacting to individual teachers who caused most disruption - those "treated unfairly by teachers", those "not liking certain lessons", those not paying attention and "losing the thread". One girl suggested that her friends disliked what she called the "sexist attitude" of some male teachers who always helped boys first (53).

- In case study school 56 above, students were also asked about their classroom behaviour. Half of the girls in the sample did not identify themselves as misbehaving in class. Only two boys confirmed that they regularly disrupted lessons. Equal numbers of boys and girls suggested that they were occasional disrupters. Students were also asked why they misbehaved. Nearly half the sample, and well over half of those who admitted to some class misbehaviour, claimed to be 'collaborators' rather than 'initiators'. Two of the three students mentioning boredom as a factor suggested that too much teacher talk often made it difficult to concentrate. The difficulty of some class work, and the frequent lack of availability of help from a busy and over-stretched teacher, were also highlighted as factors. One girl felt "annoyed and frustrated" in such circumstances. A

student who disrupted for "recognition" felt that the school provided little recognition of academic ability. Students were also asked for their views on what caused disruption, and what kinds of students misbehaved. Talking was identified as the main type of disruptive behaviour in the classroom by most of the students. Most of the causes of disruption identified related to the teaching and method of presentation in the lesson. The lack of student interest in the content of the lesson was the main cause identified. One girl said that "you just don't want to be there". Some coupled this with a complaint about too much teacher talk. There was considerable support for the view that the work set was too difficult for some students in the class, and when teachers were not available to give individual help students reacted by disrupting lessons. Some teachers were felt to be unable to check disruption effectively. Both boys and girls claimed it was mainly boys who disrupted lessons. A number said that there were also some disruptive girls - one boy suggested that boys disrupted more loudly than girls. Most students seemed aware that those joining in the disruption were also friends, many of whom met outside school. Views on the ability levels of those causing disruption varied from bright to below average. Two girls felt that disruptive boys tended to be immature, and pretended "to be thick" (56).

- A comprehensive school in south Derbyshire conducted a school-wide survey by questionnaire seeking students' views on discipline in the school. 795 completed questionnaires were returned. Students admitting to misbehaving in lessons ranged from 7% in Year 12 to 36% in Year 9.

> Talking constituted the main form of misconduct, with "messing about" a distant second. Students, including 32% of Year 9 respondents, cited peer pressure as the main cause of misbehaviour, with "boredom" as another important factor (57).

Commentary

Some of the case studies in this section are extended because the subject of the reports from which they are drawn relates specifically to the question here under review. It would appear that most students in the case study schools feel that they, at some time, misbehave in lessons. The nature of that misbehaviour is overwhelmingly talking, presumably when the teacher is talking or has asked for silence.

The students who are disruptive in lessons, as identified by their peers, appear to fall into three categories, two smaller than the third. In case study schools 52 and 53, for examples, students were able to identify small numbers of disruptive students who were intrinsically disruptive, who misbehaved because they enjoyed it and who sought to cultivate a notoriety within the school based upon their poor behaviour. Some students in the case studies above identified themselves as such, and ascribed their misbehaviour to various personality traits like hyperactivity.

A second small group, again self-identified and recognised by their peers, consisted of those who felt they were drawn into disruptive activities by

others. Such students, for example, joined in with any disruption that had been initiated by others. The third group, by far the largest, claimed that their disruption was triggered by various aspects of lessons related to teaching and learning. "Boredom' was the most commonly cited feature of such lessons. When asked to elaborate on what caused the boredom, students in many of the schools highlighted *inter alia* the uninteresting content of some lessons, too much writing, the way some lessons were presented with what they regarded as excessive use of teacher talk, and poor teacher explanation. Where teachers, faced with student disruption, showed poor class management skills, then there appeared to grow a 'culture' of classroom disruption, as in case study schools 29, 52 and 56, which drew sustenance from students' social relationships outside the classroom. In other words, classroom disruption became another social activity for groups of friends. Teachers unable to cope with disruption, and who responded in ways which students regarded as over-reaction, were unlikely to enjoy what has previously been called an 'authentic relationship' with their students, and indeed were likely to alienate them.

Summary

The literature review suggests that

- a safe working environment is generally acknowledged as important for learning;
- students in various parts of the world also recognise its importance;
- teachers try to make schools safe and enjoyable and succeed more with girls than boys;

- student participation in rule-making is an important element in securing student engagement with school, and this particularly applies to disruptive students;
- schools working with parents help consolidate student engagement.

The review of the research in case study schools suggests that

- most students enjoy school, the motivated and able more than the unmotivated and less able;
- students at different stages in their Secondary career like schools for different reasons, although peer friendships remain important throughout;
- students are generally accepting of school rules, though they have little say in their formulation and may have some reservations about their application;
- most students talk off-task at some time during lessons;
- small numbers of students disrupt lessons because they enjoy doing it, or are drawn into doing it by others;
- larger numbers disrupt lessons that they find, for a variety of reasons, 'boring'.

From these reviews, it appears that effective student learning takes place when

- teachers are perceived as firm but fair
- students can see the sense of having school rules
- students' attendance at school is good
- students behave well at school.

CHAPTER 9

The Survey of Student Conditions

The survey confirmed that we needed to address certain areas that we had already identified. We were particularly interested in some of the results and these were followed up by members of staff who went on to design their own surveys probing specific areas.

(Teacher at a Swansea Comprehensive School, Autumn 2000)

If there has been a consistent theme running through the conceptualisation of the various student conditions, it has been the emphasis on the need for dialogue. It has been suggested that students learn best when they are involved with teachers in a dialogue about how they learn and how well they learn; when they find teachers approachable and prepared to talk to them as people as well as learners; when they discuss with teachers how to take full advantage of the various teaching strategies employed in the classroom; when teachers share with their students the justification for teaching various subjects and topics in school, and when students and teachers are able to negotiate the rules which regulate the community in which they both work.

Such dialogues have proved to be time-consuming, and are often difficult to initiate without a shared focus. Teachers have found the Management and Classroom Conditions Surveys provide a useful starting point for a dialogue about practices in their schools. Our belief within IQEA that teachers would find that a survey of student views about teaching and learning would be a useful starting-point for further exploring issues related to students' learning prompted us to produce a Student Conditions Survey, which is reproduced below as figure 20.

To stress the broadbrush nature of the picture which the data presents, data are presented to schools to one place of decimals. The data presented in Figure 22 represents a collation of results from the 41 schools in which the Student Conditions Survey has to date been administered. Details of the schools have been given in Chapter 2. The data in Figure 22 are given to two decimal places in order to explain marginal differences between genders and year-groups in Figures 23 to 28. The chapter concludes with a brief description of the findings, as well as some general observations on the data.

As with the two previous instruments, the Student Conditions survey consists of 24 statements relating to behaviours associated with the six conditions. These statements are a collation of those appearing at the end of each of chapters 3 to 8. Where statements in the Student Conditions Survey 'mirror' statements in the Classroom Conditions Survey, a direct comparison of teacher and student perceptions can be made about specific aspects of teaching and learning. So, for example, Classroom Conditions statement 3.1 asks teachers to comment on how frequently *Teachers build variety into lesson plans*, while Student Conditions statement 4.1 asks how frequently *Lessons in this school are varied, and don't follow a pattern.*

Figure 21 summarises the relationship between the Classroom Conditions and their 'mirror' Student Condition. Students are required to comment on the frequency of each of the 24 behaviours in their schools, using a four-point scale ranging from 'rarely' to 'nearly always'. This means that responses can be converted into Likert scores within the range of 1 to 4, with scores closest to

STUDENT CONDITIONS

SELF-ASSESSMENT.				
1.1	**At some time during the day I think about what I've learnt.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.2	**I know how well I'm doing in school.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.3	**I take care about what I write in any report to my parents.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
1.4	**I ask teachers how I can improve my work.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
INDEPENDENT LEARNING.				
2.1	**I can find the classroom books and equipment I need for lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.2	**We do problem-solving in lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.3	**We do groupwork in lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
2.4	**I use books at home or in libraries to do research.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
AFFINITY TO TEACHERS.				
3.1	**I get on well with teachers in this school.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.2	**Teachers in this school make us want to work.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.3	**Teachers in this school are helpful.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
3.4	**We discuss with teachers what work we should do.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

Figure 20: The Student Conditions Survey

LEARNING REPERTOIRE.				
4.1	**Lessons in this school are varied, and don't follow a pattern.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.2	**I cope with the different teaching styles that teachers use.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.3	**Lessons in this school are interesting.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
4.4	**We are taught new ways of working, for example how to work well in groups.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
ORIENTATION TO LEARNING.				
5.1	**I look forward to lessons.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.2	**I work hard in school.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.3	**I put lots of effort into my homework.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
5.4	**Hard work is rewarded in this school.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL.				
6.1	**Teachers in this school are firm but fair.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.2	**I can see the sense of having school rules.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.3	**My weekly attendance at school is good.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS
6.4	**My behaviour in school is good.**			
	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	NEARLY ALWAYS

Figure 20 (continued): The Student Conditions Survey

Teacher Condition.	Associated teacher behaviours.	Student Condition.	Associated student behaviours.
Authentic Relationships *The quality, openness and congruence of relationships existing in the classroom*	Positive regard for all students Consistency and fairness Listening to students Giving students responsibility	Affinity to teachers *The ability of students to maintain a relationship with teachers that enables them to seek and receive help and support when they require it*	Getting on well with teachers Being motivated by teachers Accepting teacher help Negotiating with teachers
Boundaries and Expectations *The pattern of expectations set by the teacher and school of student performance and behaviour within the classroom*	Establishing clear behaviour expectations Rewards/sanctions system promoting self-discipline Creating a learning environment Consistency with flexibility	Adjustment to school *The ability of students to learn within a structured environment of rules and behaviour parameters*	Accepting firmness with fairness Accepting principle of having rules Regular attendance Behaving well
Planning for Teaching *The access of teachers to a range of pertinent teaching materials and the ability to plan and differentiate those materials for a range of students*	Planning for variety Responding to student feedback Differentiating Using homework to support learning	Independent Learning *The ability of students to access the skills and resources necessary to achieve learning autonomy*	Access to resources for independent learning Solving problems in class Taking part in group work Undertaking research activities
Teaching Repertoire *The range of teaching styles and models available for use by a teacher, dependent on student, context, curriculum and desired outcome*	Using a range of teaching skills Using a variety of teaching styles Developing teaching models Being able to adjust teaching approach if circumstances demand	Learning Repertoire *The ability of students to exploit fully the range of teaching and learning strategies encountered in and out of the classroom*	Experiencing variety of teaching approaches Coping with different teaching styles Finding lessons interesting Being taught new learning methods
Pedagogic Partnerships *The ability of teachers to form professional relationships within and outside the classroom that focus on the study and improvement of practice*	Talking to other teachers about teaching Developing teaching strategy guidelines Agreeing on standards to assess student progress Observation of, and teaching with, other teachers	Orientation to Learning *The ability of students to be self-motivated, and to enjoy learning*	Enjoying lessons Working hard in school Working hard at homework Being rewarded for hard work
Reflection on Teaching *The capacity of the individual teacher to reflect on his or her own practice, and to put to the test of practice, specifications of teaching from other sources*	Systematic data collection and analysis related to teaching Evaluation of teaching School-wide data collection Establishment of research protocols in the school	Self-assessment *The ability of students to reflect upon and to improve the quality of their own work*	Reflection on learning Awareness of own performance Taking involvement in self-reporting seriously Seeking teacher advice on how to improve

Figure 21: Classroom Conditions, and related Student Conditions

		Y7 Boys 373	Y7 Girls 420	Y7 All 816	Y8 Boys 362	Y8 Girls 375	Y8 All 738	Y9 Boys 698	Y9 Girls 650	Y9 All 1363	Y10 Boys 530	Y10 Girls 598	Y10 All 1147	Y11 Boys 492	Y11 Girls 540	Y11 All 1052	Y12 Boys 261	Y12 Girls 247	Y12 All 516	Y13 Boys 160	Y13 Girls 193	Y13 All 359
Self-assessment	1.1	2.17	2.23	2.21	1.85	2.02	1.94	1.91	1.84	1.87	1.85	1.80	1.82	1.85	1.94	1.89	2.08	2.20	2.14	2.08	2.22	2.16
	1.2	2.66	2.73	2.70	2.50	2.71	2.61	2.63	2.54	2.58	2.65	2.52	2.58	2.66	2.71	2.69	2.86	2.75	2.81	3.00	2.90	2.94
	1.3	3.12	3.17	3.15	2.90	3.10	3.00	2.89	2.89	2.88	2.76	2.83	2.79	2.59	2.88	2.74	2.72	2.80	2.76	2.30	2.62	2.47
	1.4	1.81	1.84	1.82	1.69	1.82	1.76	1.81	1.76	1.78	1.89	1.94	1.92	2.03	2.22	2.13	2.17	2.28	2.22	2.11	2.28	2.20
Independent learning	2.1	3.41	3.47	3.45	3.10	3.30	3.20	3.11	3.12	3.11	3.15	3.08	3.11	3.11	3.23	3.17	3.10	3.20	3.15	3.04	3.14	3.09
	2.2	2.44	2.53	2.49	2.22	2.39	2.30	2.24	2.19	2.21	2.31	2.19	2.25	2.25	2.31	2.28	2.38	2.17	2.27	2.41	2.11	2.25
	2.3	2.54	2.67	2.61	2.25	2.48	2.37	2.37	2.47	2.41	2.26	2.44	2.35	2.17	2.42	2.30	2.47	2.68	2.57	2.38	2.61	2.51
	2.4	2.37	2.67	2.53	2.30	2.59	2.45	2.38	2.61	2.49	2.09	2.32	2.20	2.04	2.40	2.22	2.59	2.96	2.77	2.54	3.04	2.81
Affinity to teachers	3.1	2.92	3.24	3.09	2.49	2.87	2.68	2.75	2.82	2.78	2.64	2.77	2.70	2.67	3.01	2.84	3.18	3.32	3.25	3.24	3.26	3.25
	3.2	2.76	2.79	2.78	2.51	2.69	2.60	2.53	2.49	2.51	2.46	2.35	2.40	2.26	2.43	2.35	2.54	2.67	2.61	2.60	2.59	2.60
	3.3	3.05	3.16	3.11	2.67	2.88	2.78	2.70	2.74	2.71	2.59	2.58	2.58	2.52	2.68	2.60	2.84	2.97	2.90	2.98	3.00	2.99
	3.4	2.51	2.62	2.56	2.33	2.46	2.40	2.33	2.34	2.33	2.25	2.24	2.25	2.24	2.50	2.38	2.72	2.69	2.71	2.69	2.77	2.74
Learning repertoire	4.1	2.39	2.49	2.44	2.19	2.33	2.26	2.14	2.17	2.15	2.07	1.99	2.03	2.17	2.14	2.15	1.91	1.98	1.94	2.04	1.98	2.01
	4.2	2.86	3.03	2.96	2.66	2.99	2.82	2.72	2.80	2.75	2.70	2.76	2.73	2.69	2.91	2.80	2.89	2.83	2.86	2.91	2.97	2.94
	4.3	2.51	2.50	2.51	2.11	2.24	2.17	2.14	2.16	2.15	2.02	2.05	2.03	1.94	2.10	2.02	2.34	2.49	2.41	2.26	2.46	2.37
	4.4	2.51	2.68	2.60	2.32	2.52	2.42	2.28	2.31	2.29	2.05	2.14	2.10	1.95	2.17	2.06	2.19	2.24	2.21	1.96	2.13	2.05
Orientation to learning	5.1	2.13	2.38	2.27	1.84	2.03	1.94	1.96	1.97	1.96	1.88	1.91	1.89	1.81	1.98	1.89	2.08	2.19	2.13	2.01	2.11	2.07
	5.2	3.14	3.37	3.26	2.76	3.11	2.93	2.95	3.05	2.99	2.78	2.97	2.88	2.66	2.95	2.81	2.92	3.08	3.00	2.55	2.95	2.76
	5.3	3.04	3.25	3.14	2.59	2.95	2.77	2.66	2.88	2.76	2.51	2.82	2.67	2.25	2.70	2.49	2.64	2.86	2.75	2.40	2.83	2.63
	5.4	2.96	3.03	2.99	2.69	2.85	2.77	2.51	2.62	2.55	2.28	2.25	2.26	2.07	2.33	2.20	2.21	2.29	2.25	2.11	2.28	2.20
Adjustment to school	6.1	2.62	2.80	2.72	2.25	2.62	2.44	2.40	2.48	2.44	2.27	2.31	2.29	2.23	2.37	2.30	2.51	2.58	2.55	2.55	2.60	2.58
	6.2	3.03	3.24	3.14	2.68	2.87	2.78	2.89	2.76	2.83	2.72	2.69	2.70	2.68	2.75	2.71	3.05	3.07	3.06	3.07	3.07	3.07
	6.3	3.45	3.58	3.52	3.27	3.40	3.34	3.51	3.48	3.49	3.48	3.44	3.46	3.51	3.50	3.50	3.71	3.52	3.62	3.57	3.50	3.53
	6.4	3.10	3.53	3.31	2.82	3.33	3.08	3.09	3.30	3.19	3.11	3.30	3.20	3.09	3.45	3.27	3.58	3.70	3.64	3.54	3.68	3.62
Number of schools				23			25			41			39			36			24			22

Figure 22: IQEA Student Conditions data 1999 – 2000

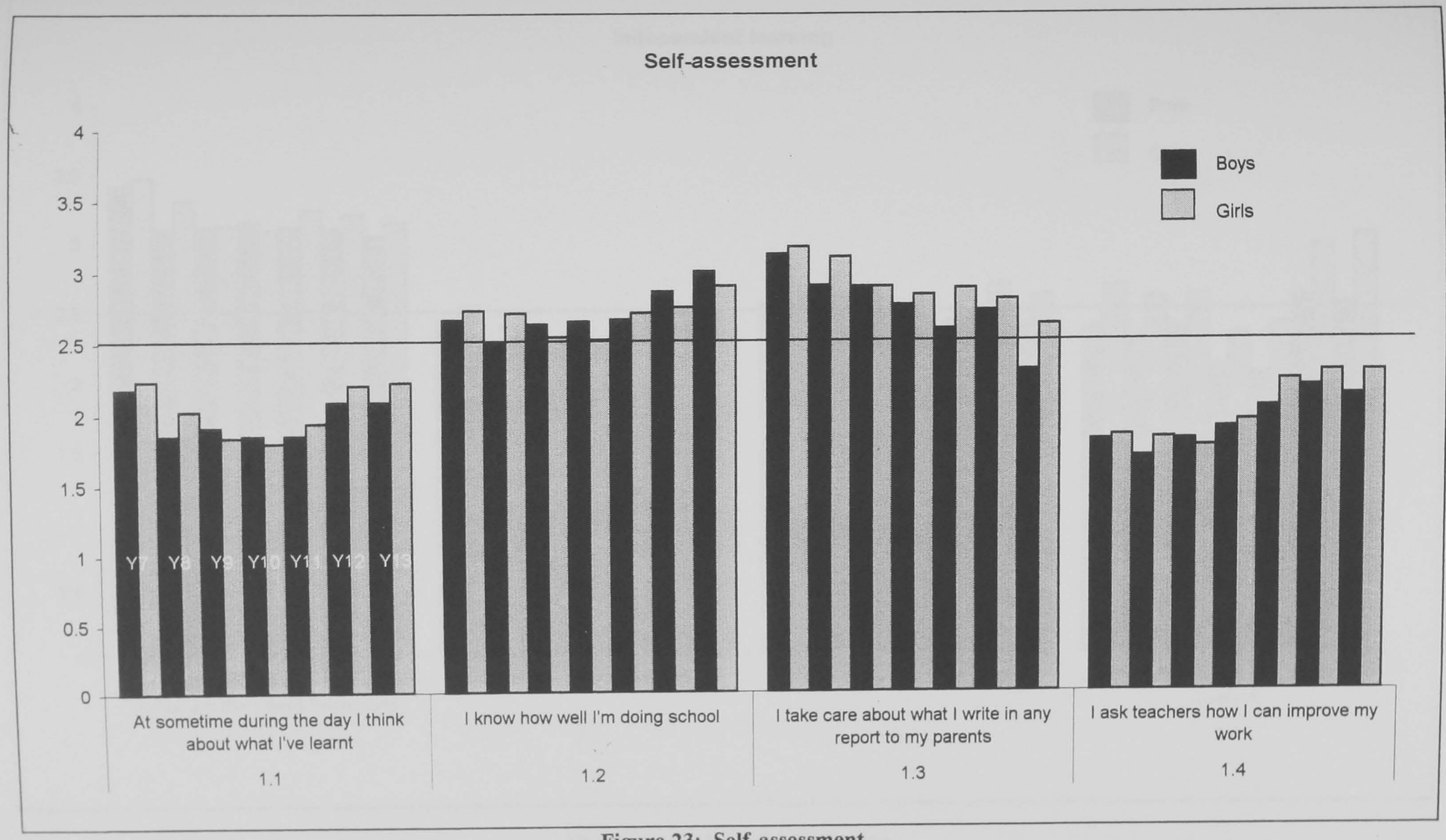


Figure 23: Self-assessment

Figure 24: Independent learning

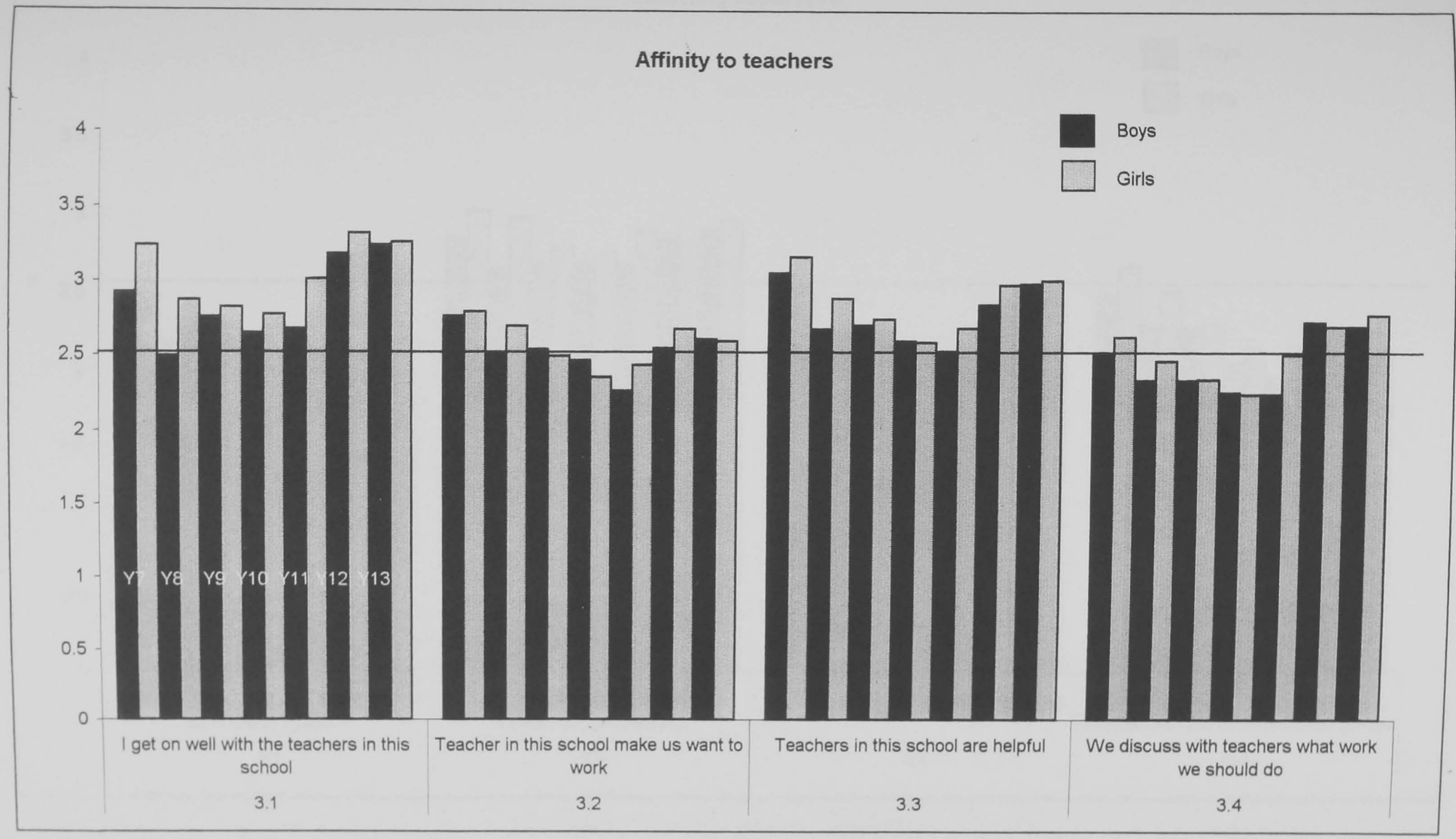


Figure 25: Affinity to teachers

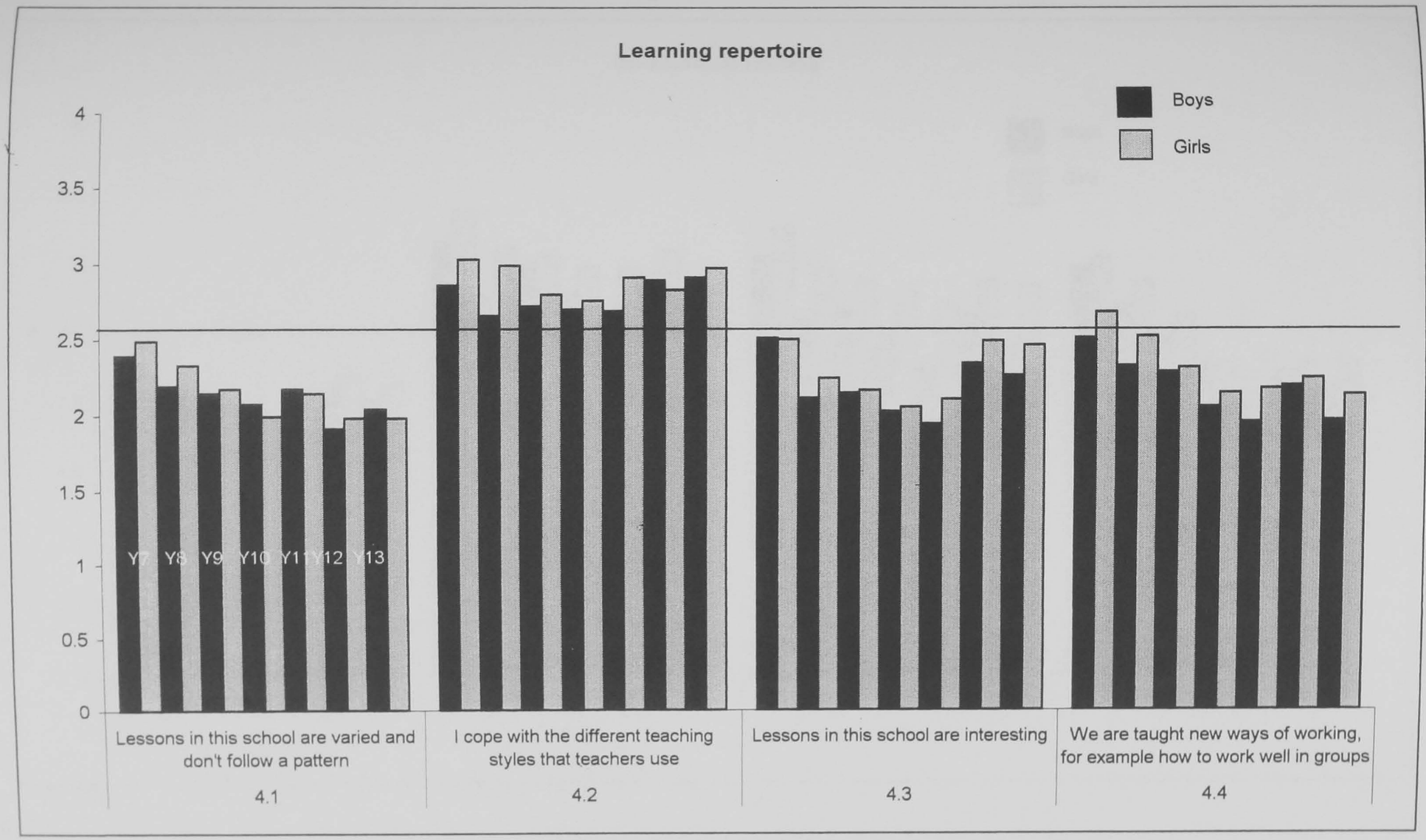


Figure 26: Learning repertoire

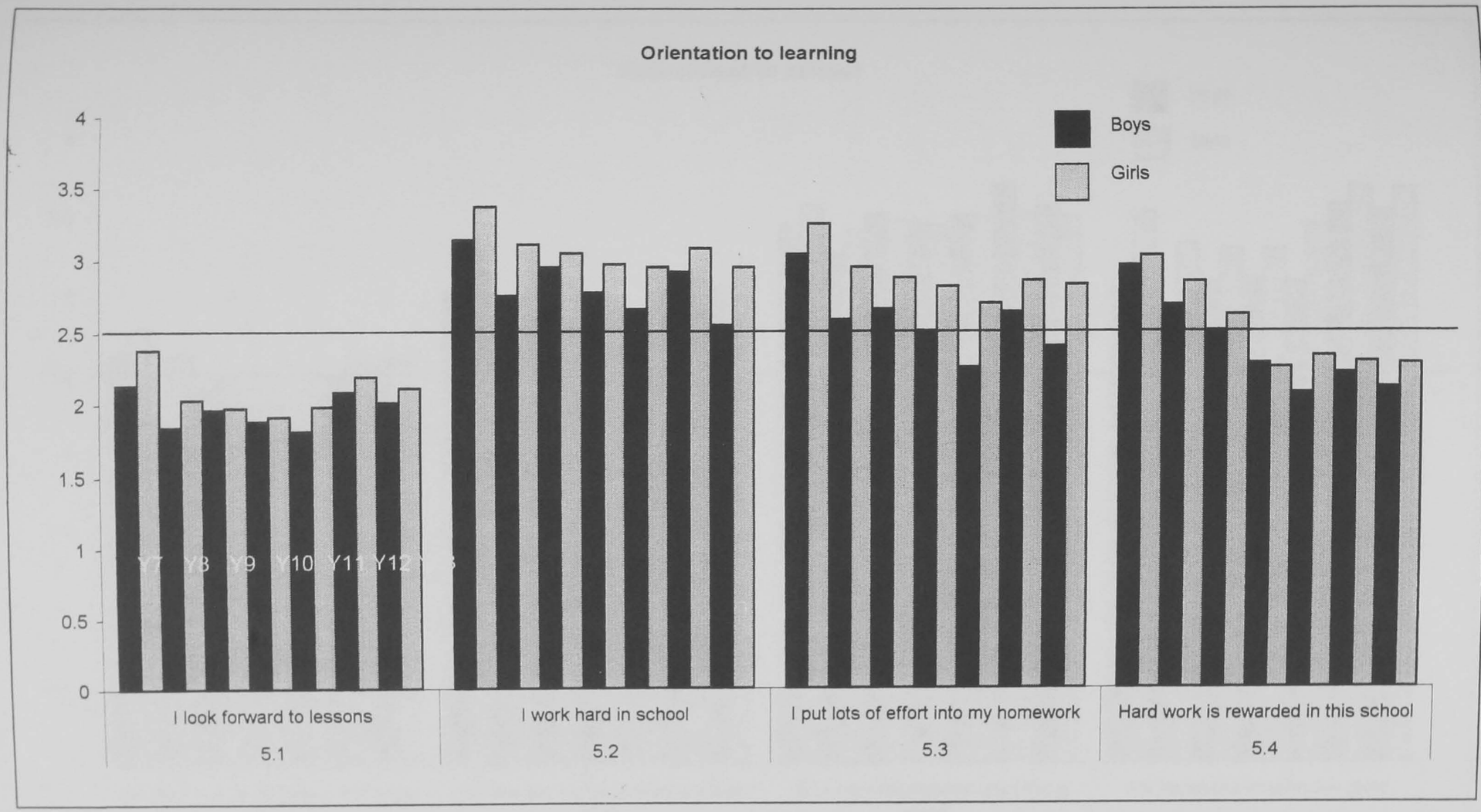


Figure 27: Orientation to Learning

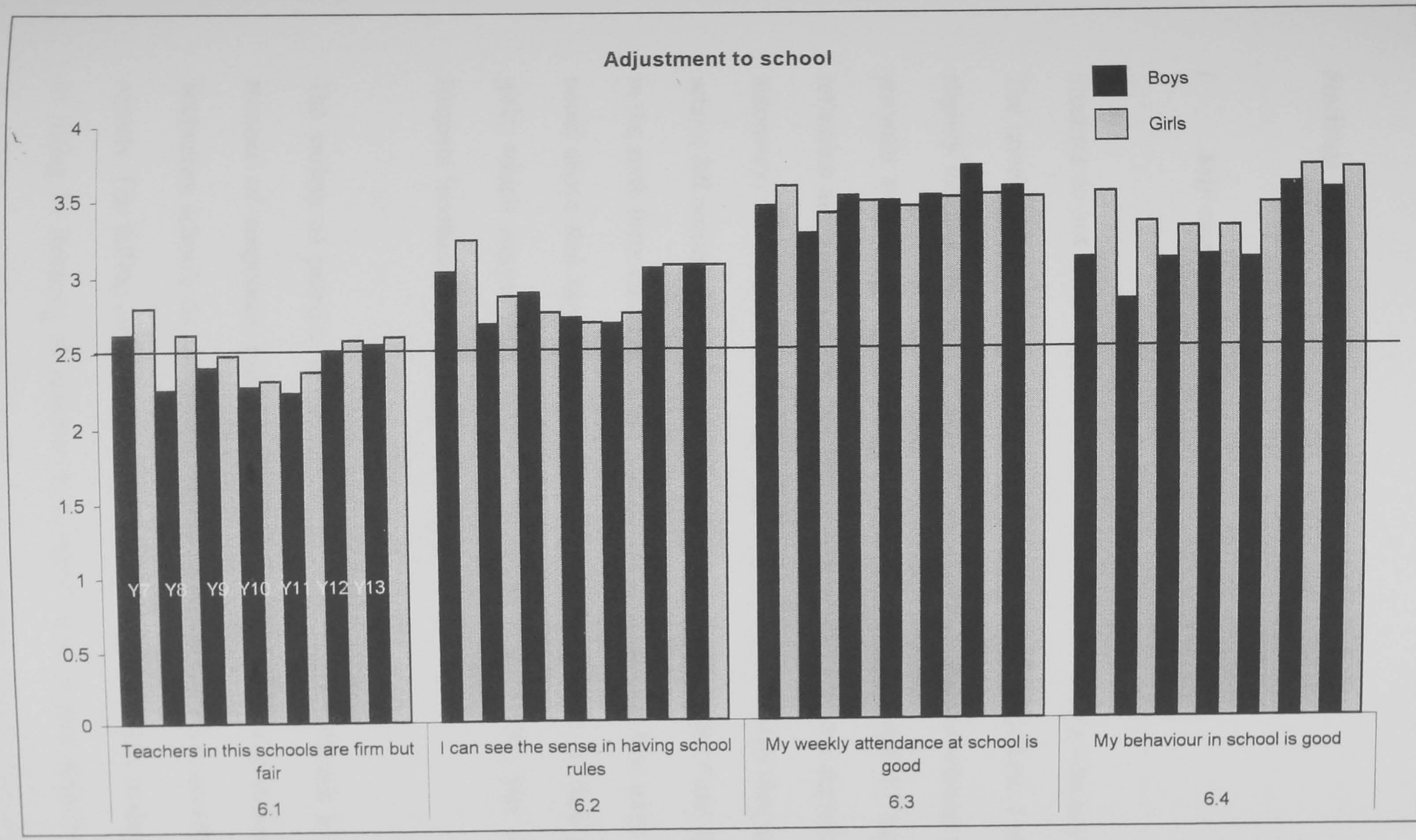


Figure 28: Adjustment to school

1 indicating low frequency, those closest to 4 high frequency and 2.5 as the mean.

Findings

i ***Self-assessment***

Students do not reflect upon what they have learnt at school with any regularity. The novelty of Secondary school may partly explain why Year 7 students are slightly more reflective: parents may show a high level of interest which may provoke such behaviour. The slight rise in Years 12 and 13 suggests that reflection also occurs more frequently where students have a degree of learning autonomy. The Likert scores for students knowing how well they are doing at school fall around the mean. There is a dip with girls in Years 9 and 10, and boys in the sixth form claim to have a slightly better knowledge than girls. It has been noted above that boys often have a more inflated opinion of their ability than girls, which suggests that boys are misinterpreting at least part of the more frequent feedback they feel they are getting.

The variety of practice in report-writing in schools is reflected in the smaller number of responses made by students to this particular statement. Many Secondary schools do not apparently require their students to contribute to their reports. The falling away from a Year 7 peak may also reflect students' attitudes to filling in Records of Achievement, which they in turn claim to reflect the diminishing interest of many staff. Boys' interest declines dramatically after Year

7 (with a slight revival in Year 12). Girls consistently claim to take more care than boys when contributing to reports.

Most students do not ask teachers routinely for help to improve. Girls are generally more inclined to ask than boys except in Year 9, where some girls have been highly critical of some teachers' personalities. There is an increase in asking by both genders, however, in the examination period of Years 10 to 13.

Students across the Secondary sector are not particularly reflective, and the 'culture of asking' described by Black and Wiliam as a necessary prerequisite of student self-assessment does not flourish to any great extent. Students have limited opportunities to discuss teaching and learning issues both in verbal exchanges with their teachers and in written exchanges with their parents.

ii Independent Learning

Students can generally find the resources they need for lessons. Girls are consistently more proficient than boys (except in Year 10). Again, Year 7 students score highest - this suggests that they are more fastidious in producing the equipment they are required by the school to provide. It also suggests, something confirmed by IQEA field research, that teachers use more independent learning strategies in Year 7 than in the rest of Key Stage 3.

Problem-solving is infrequent except in Year 7, which again suggests a more teacher-directed approach to learning in the rest of Key Stage 3. The almost

universal identification of problem-solving with maths may explain why boys, who opt more for maths-based subjects at 'A' level, appear to do more problem-solving than girls in the sixth form.

The frequency of groupwork falls around the mean. Interestingly, girls in all year-groups claim to do more groupwork than boys. Girls' greater enthusiasm for the social aspect of groupwork may mean that they interact more than some boys, who are inclined to work alone even when a group task has been set.

Girls in all years use books for independent research more frequently than boys. This may be partly off-set by boys being more prepared to use ICT. There is a marked decline in the use of books for such research in the GCSE years. This may be because teachers rely more upon didactic methods and the production of their own materials to deliver the courses than in other years.

The enthusiasm of students for groupwork identified in the research literature is not harnessed to any great extent by teachers in Secondary schools. The joint pressures of syllabus requirements and keeping good classroom order may help to explain this limited use. Opportunities for students to refine what Hubbard calls their 'craft knowledge' are restricted, perhaps for similar reasons. Girls using books more than boys for research purposes confirms the findings of various studies on gender variations related to literacy (see, for example, Beresford 1997).

iii Affinity to teachers

Students generally get on fairly well with their teachers. Girls become less enthusiastic after Year 7, reaching a Year 10 low, but along with boys enjoy teaching relationships in the sixth form.

Most students become less motivated by their teachers as they progress through Key Stage 3. The initial enthusiasm of Year 7 falls away to a Year 10 trough for girls and a Year 11 one for boys. Levels for both genders rise again in the sixth form, where students are presumably buoyed partly by wanting to be in school studying the subjects of their own choice rather than being required to attend.

Teachers are generally perceived as helpful, although students' perceptions follow a similar pattern to their responses about motivation. Girls find teachers least helpful in Year 10, boys in Year 11. Girls in all years except Year 10 find their teachers more helpful than boys.

Discussions with teachers about what work students should do are infrequent, except in the sixth form. Girls again score lowest in Year 10, boys in Years 10 and 11.

The data confirm the centrality, highlighted in the literature and in the research in IQEA schools, of the teacher-student relationship in students' learning. While students generally maintain reasonable relationships with their teachers throughout their secondary careers, the quality of those relationships appear

inadequate to motivate students to work harder. While teachers proffer help when it is required, they are less inclined to negotiate with students about the work they should do.

iv Learning repertoire

The variety of teaching strategies used in lessons generally decline after Year 7. The comparative leap in Year 11 suggests that teachers use a range of revision activities in trying to boost GCSE results, or that student perceptions are coloured by their desire to do well.

Students generally feel they can cope with different teaching styles. This feeling is strong in Year 7, when students may be inducted into a range of teaching approaches. Girls appear to cope more easily than boys, except in Year 12.

Lessons become less interesting for many students after Year 7, with boys' ratings lowest in Year 11 and girls' in Year 10. Girls find lessons more interesting than boys in every year except Year 7.

In Year 7, more than in any other year, students are taught new ways of working. More girls than boys in each year feel they are taught new methods.

These findings suggest a strong relationship between the range of teaching strategies and styles used in lessons, and students' interest in and enjoyment of those lessons. They confirm our own research within IQEA, that schools often

instruct Year 7 students in learning techniques in order to extend their learning repertoire, but give little further instruction thereafter. Most students cope with the range of teaching styles and strategies they are offered, but this range becomes static or even more restricted (see above) after Year 7, when students become less interested, less engaged and less motivated.

- ***Orientation to Learning***

Many students tend not to look forward to lessons. Boys in each year look forward to them less than girls. There is some revival of enthusiasm in the sixth form.

Students generally feel that they work hard in school. More girls than boys in all years feel they work hard. Both boys and girls fall away from a Year 7 peak, with both genders showing some revival in Year 12. Boys show some enthusiasm in Year 9, the year where students in most schools select their subject options.

Girls in all years claim to work harder at homework than boys. After the initial enthusiasm of Year 7, both genders fall away. Both show some revival in the sixth form, boys from an alarmingly low trough in Year 11.

From a Year 7 peak, most students fall away in their enthusiasm for reward systems within their schools. Girls in all years except Year 10 feel that hard work is rewarded more than boys.

Girls feel that they work harder both in school and at home than boys. This confirms recent research findings on gender and school performance (see, for example, Arnot et al. 1998). The disenchantment with reward systems after Year 7 squares with related research in this thesis.

vi Adjustment to school

Students generally feel that teachers exercise fair discipline in Year 7, but are less convinced in Years 8 to 10, when student feelings about justice and equity are strongest. More girls than boys in each year feel that teachers are just. Both genders appear happier about this aspect of school in the sixth form.

Students can generally see the sense of school rules. Years 8 to 11 feel less strongly than Year 7 and the sixth form. Girls in Years 9 and 10, where dress codes seem to be strongly enforced, are more discontented than boys.

Nearly all students appear to feel that their school attendance is good. There is a slight dip with Year 8 boys.

Most students also believe that they behave well in school. Again there is a slight dip with Year 8 boys. Girls in all years feel they behave better than boys. Student perceptions that they behave well are strongest in the sixth form.

This is the least problematic and most developed of the six conditions, at least in students' perceptions. Students find that their teachers are reasonably just, and

they themselves are generally accepting of school rules. They attend school regularly, and feel that they behave reasonably well. The importance of a secure and safe learning environment advocated in the research literature is acknowledged by most students.

General Findings

This last section has commented on the data presented in Figure 22 and the graphs reproduced at the end of the paper. Where it has been felt appropriate, reasons for the pattern of student responses have been suggested, and have been related to the relevant field of research. There are also certain more general themes that emerge from the collective data.

- Students of both genders highlight the high frequency of behaviours over which they feel they have some control, for example school attendance, good behaviour and finding classroom equipment.

- Girls are generally more contented at Secondary school than boys. They almost consistently rate the frequency of each behaviour higher than boys in the same year-group.

- The low frequency of student reflection and seeking help from teachers means that, in the absence of these key components, students will find it difficult to assess with any accuracy how well they are doing, and how they can improve.

- Opportunities for independent learning are limited in many schools.

- Many teachers use a restricted teaching repertoire, which means that students find many lessons uninteresting.

- Despite this, students generally show positive attitudes to work and behaving well.

- Year 7 students are generally enthusiastic about their schools. They take greatest care about what they report to parents, they are best able to access classroom equipment, they find teachers more helpful than other year groups, they are extremely enthusiastic about their lessons, claim to work harder than other years and are happier with school rules.

- Year 8 boys are discontented with their lot at school. They are the group least able to self-assess, the group with poorest relationships with teachers and the group whose self-perception of their behaviour is poorest.

- Of the girls, Year 10 are the most discontented. They are the least reflective of their gender, they use books for independent research least, they have the poorest relationships with their teachers, they enjoy lessons the least and they have most complaints about school rules. Boys show similar traits in Year 11, which may have some impact upon their performance at GCSE.

Part of this chapter will appear in Beresford 2002.

CHAPTER 10

Implications

The new economic, social and cultural challenges ...make learning pivotal to contemporary progress. Initial education and training systems need to be of such universally high quality that all young people secure the foundation of knowledge, skills and values to enable their full participation in meeting these different challenges. To do so, they should acquire the ability to learn and re-learn.

(Extract from Ministers' Communiqué, Conference of Education Ministers, Paris, November 1990 [quoted in OECD 1994:17])

The challenges highlighted by the education ministers at their 1990 meeting provide what were referred to in the opening chapter as the climatic conditions for school improvement. They arise in part from the ongoing revolution in information technology and communications, and the opening of new markets in all parts of the world. Shorter-term economic developments, like the rise in the price of oil in the west during the 1970s, also contribute to this climate.

The response of governments in industrialised countries has been to devise education systems that provide a basic, cost-effective education that will enable as many of the population as possible to work effectively and to participate fully as citizens in this changing climate. The key components of this basic competence have been identified as the ability and willingness to learn new knowledge and skills, and the ability to work with others.

In England and Wales, the foundations of this basic education were provided by the National Curriculum. Systemic changes since 1988 have been designed to shore up areas where it was felt that students needed supplementary help. There have been changes in the content of the education programme offered: the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies were introduced to boost achievement levels in these subject areas in the Primary sector, and the Key Skills Strategy has been introduced for older Secondary students to further develop the vocational skills they will need in their future careers.

The government has acted where particular groups of students have been identified as under-performing: the extension of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to younger Secondary students is part of a Key Stage 3 Strategy designed to boost the engagement and performance of students aged 11 to 14. Under-performance in certain geographical areas has led the government to resource an Excellence in Cities initiative as well as Education Action Zones. Finally, the emphasis in the Key Stage 3 Strategy on developing students' thinking skills and upon teachers honouring different learning styles suggests that the government now recognises that for some students under-achievement may also be a function of the teaching strategies deployed in the classroom.

School improvement in the context described above has been defined in terms of the numbers who achieve the 'foundation level of capability' (Skilbeck 1994) necessary for future participation in work and society. The government has set national and district (LEA) targets for numbers achieving this level, and schools have also been expected to set their own. The government has

harnessed the systems of schools support at district level to help schools achieve these targets. An inspection system has been in operation since 1992 to identify shortcomings in the education system at district and school levels. The inspection arm has also provided much of the data on which the government has acted on under-performance in the initiatives listed above.

At school level a mixture of systemic and cultural conditions have been identified as necessary for improvement initiatives to take root and flourish. School improvement appears to occur where improvement initiatives are appropriately planned and resourced, where teachers collaborate to research and disseminate good practice, where staff development is a high priority and where all members of the school community, including students, are involved in the running of the school. In the classroom effective learning appears to take place where teacher-students relations are good, where learning activities are well planned, ordered and varied, and where teachers research their own practice.

The purpose of this thesis has been to devise an instrument whereby student views on what happens in schools can be canvassed. Teachers have shown interest in these views, in part because students' views of learning in school are seen as important in shaping attitudes to learning after compulsory schooling, in part because negative attitudes to learning impact upon the levels of access to the general education which schools provide. Devising such an instrument has required a reconceptualisation of the IQEA classroom conditions in order that the conditions and associated behaviours are recognisable to students. The

reconceptualisation, along with the findings of the pilot administration of the Student Conditions Survey, have implications relating to teaching and learning in the classroom, and it is these implications to which the next section is devoted.

This reconceptualisation also has implications for school improvement. School improvement programmes have to date focused almost exclusively upon developing and sustaining the skills of managers and teachers in schools. It is the contention of this thesis that school improvement efforts need also to be equally directed at developing and sustaining a culture which actively involves students in the organisation of their learning and of their learning environment. The final two sections look at different levels of student involvement in the process of school improvement, and the nature of changes in the culture of the classroom and of the school necessary to bring about the level of involvement described in this thesis.

Student Conditions: Implications for teaching and learning

Self-assessment

From the findings of the pilot survey of student conditions, it appears that Secondary students in England and Wales are not particularly reflective about their work, are not routinely asked to self-report on their progress and are only inclined to ask teachers for help during examination years. Students have a patchy view of how well they are doing in school.

The government has recognised the importance of self-assessment for older Secondary students in its Key Skills programme. It has been argued in this thesis that self-assessment skills are sufficiently important for student learning to be addressed at a far earlier stage, perhaps at Primary level.

Teachers' regular formative assessments, which provide advice on how the student's performance at a particular task can be improved, are particularly useful if assimilated by the student, not only in meeting the requirements of particular tasks, but also in promoting student reflection as a regular element of such systematic feedback. An awareness of the success criteria relating to a particular task enables students to identify the skills and knowledge required to complete the task, to help them gauge how well they are doing and to help them identify areas for improvement. The public nature of such criteria also enables teachers to share with students (and students to share with other students) ideas on how they could improve. Information relating to where the task fits into the curriculum being taught enables students to understand the purpose behind the learning activity that they are being asked to undertake.

This approach has already proved useful for students who experience learning difficulties (Hughes 1994). Teachers often give this information in the form of learning goals. This helps to provide students with the holistic view of the subject enjoyed by their teachers and enables them, if they wish, to study around the areas covered in classwork. Where deadlines are set and guidelines provided on the sort of activities that students need to undertake in order to

complete a task, students are able to plan and to pace the work they are being asked to do.

The ability to identify the skills required to complete learning tasks enables students to assess how well they are likely to do, and what steps they need to take in order to improve. For example, a task requiring students to listen carefully is likely to be done well by those who are not distracted easily. Those who have identified the appropriate skill, but feel they need to develop it further, may ask to be moved to a place in the classroom where they are less likely to be distracted. Students who are aware of, and sensitive to, the requirements of the teaching strategies employed by teachers are more likely to derive educational benefit from those strategies than those students who are not. For example, students who know how to work effectively in groups will derive more benefit than those who are disruptive in groupwork.

Students skilled in the use of a wide range of resources are provided with a wider range of options to complete a task than those who lack the skills. This enables students to plan their work more independently. Access to an approachable and helpful adult, when they feel that they are not equipped with the necessary skills or knowledge to complete a learning task, enables students to remain confident learners, particularly when help is provided in a non-judgmental way, with no aspersions being cast upon students' learning skills.

Further research is needed in methods of assessment by teachers that convey these skills in ways that do not decrease teaching time too dramatically. The

applicability of good practice at GCSE and sixth form levels to Key Stage 3 learning would seem a useful starting point. Methods of getting students to reflect upon and evaluate their learning, which again are an efficient use of time, need bringing to a wider audience of teachers. Ways need to be devised of involving students in recording and reporting their own progress that will be seen as more worthwhile to them than Records of Achievement.

Reflecting on, and being able to assess, how well they are doing liberates and motivates students. The possession of these skills allows students "to become agents of their own learning and to use what they learn in productive and critical ways" (Cooper and Fielding 1998). This work endorses the sentiment that

> *achievement at whatever level is based on pupils' ability to respond effectively to the tasks they are set and this depends on how well they can take control over their own learning.*
>
> (Hopkins and MacGilchrist 1998)

Independent Learning

From the pilot survey, it would appear that opportunities for independent learning decrease in number after the first year in Secondary schools. It has been suggested that this is due in part to teachers' preoccupation with delivering examination syllabuses: teachers feel more in control of delivery when their teaching is didactic. Interestingly, this seems to be the case with Hong Kong teachers in IQEA schools, who have the added pressure of

justifying methods of delivery to parents who buy the examination course textbooks.

Another factor identified in the decline of independent learning after Year 7 is students' imperfect knowledge of how to work independently. This often leads to groupwork being disrupted by students who find working in groups difficult. Teachers need to justify to students teaching time to be spent on learning the various independent learning skills. For many students the teaching of learning processes will be an uncommon experience. The focus of such justification needs to be the ways in which it will benefit students' learning.

Students may have a sufficient grounding in some skills, for example note taking, to be able to contribute to a discussion on the necessary attributes of a particular learning strategy. Once these attributes are established, the teacher can embark upon coaching the students in using them. The teacher can provide opportunities for students to practise these newly-acquired skills. Where students have been coached in research skills, the teacher provides a wide range of resources that the student can use to complete research tasks. Using their knowledge of students' own knowledge levels, the teacher can set appropriate problems to be solved. Groupwork activities can be facilitated. The teacher offers advice when asked by students. Teachers and Learning Assistants in one IQEA Primary School have modelled groupwork to Year 6 students by taking part in a collaborative work session observed by the class.

The teacher monitors students' progress in developing independent learning skills. This can be done in a variety of ways: by observing individual students, by inviting feedback from individual students or groups of students and by assessing the work produced by individual students or groups of students. In such ways the teacher can assess what further coaching or practice students need to refine a particular skill. Clearly the marking of homework provides an opportunity for such assessment.

Teachers will need examples of good practice that extend various strategies to subject areas with which they are not normally associated, for example group work in maths, problem-solving in the humanities and independent research in the sciences. Methods of assessing individual student progress in independent learning, as well as of recognising and assessing group achievement, need to be made more widely available to teachers.

Many schools assume that students acquire the skills of independent learning necessary, for example, for much sixth-form work by a process of osmosis, through occasional exposure to the various associated teaching strategies. The literature, and the experience of many of the case study schools, suggest that the acquisition has to be a far more deliberate process, and one on which teachers need to spend a great deal of time and energy. Given the demands of a prescribed curriculum and the accountability imposed by a highly public examination system, it is often easier for teachers not to bother. We believe in the IQEA Project that

powerful learning does not occur by accident

(Joyce et al. 1997: 151)

and that teachers are critical agents in the creation of such powerful learning, of which independent learning is a key element.

Affinity to Teachers

The survey suggests that students of both genders generally get on quite well with their teachers, although they appear not to be highly motivated by them in the GCSE years. The discussion of work to be done does not appear to be a routine part of Secondary school life below the sixth form. The government has recognised the importance of student engagement and motivation in these years with the introduction of its Key Stage 3 Strategy. Part of that Strategy, we would suggest, should be some intelligence of how students view teachers.

From the literature and from research related to this work there appears to be a set of teacher qualities that can help facilitate student affinity to teachers. Suggesting teacher strategies to improve student affinity to teachers is more difficult than for other conditions. Firstly, it is hard to legislate for a desired set of student feelings about their teachers. This is clearly a more speculative activity than, say, creating the classroom conditions necessary for students to undertake independent learning. Secondly, it is clear from the literature and the research in IQEA schools that students value different qualities in their teachers according to what stage they have reached in their Secondary career.

Students like teachers to be approachable so that they can consult them about work problems. Teachers signal their approachability by themselves showing an interest in the lives of their students. This interest itself develops what students regard as an 'understanding' of them as young people. Where such understanding exists, teachers can initiate dialogues with students about teaching and learning.

As well as being approachable, students value teachers who give advice without being censorious, for example those who do not criticise students for failing to listen to (or understand) the initial instructions related to a task. Kindness also embraces patience, and students value teachers who will explain at length, often on an individual basis. Kindness also involves teachers not being over-strict, and shouting. Teachers who not only initiate fun, but are able to share their students' sense of humour, are valued by students. Those who do this successfully are still able to keep order and maintain the focus on learning in the lesson. Students also like teachers who organise fun learning activities.

Year 7 students seem to get on better with their teachers than students further up the Secondary school, and are initially keen to please. They therefore respond to the high expectations of their teachers and to the rewards system operating in the school. After the initial enthusiasm of Year 7, and their special treatment as newcomers to the school, students often feel let down in Year 8. Schools can counter this by giving Year 8 students added responsibilities and privileges.

Most students, by Years 9 and 10, have become more settled in their social relationships in school, and have grown in self-esteem. They want teachers to show them the same respect as they show their friends, and dislike teacher condescension, teacher name-calling or a failure to understand problems related to work. Students in Years 9 and 10 also feel strongly about issues of justice and consistency, and look to their teachers to provide both in their dealings with them. In particular, students at this stage of their Secondary careers dislike teacher stereotyping and group punishments (where whole classes are punished for the misdemeanours of a few). As students approach important public examinations, they start to value a teacher's pedagogy more. Students seem prepared to approach teachers more for help at such times.

While suggesting that students like different qualities in their teachers at different stages of their Secondary school careers, there appears to be a 'core' set of qualities which all students admire. These appear to relate to interpersonal skills - kindness, approachability and humour. Teachers with these qualities appear able to motivate students in Year 7 with a combination of high expectations and acceptable levels of teacher press. Such teachers seemingly have the ability to make students in Year 8 feel 'special', and to dispense justice without controversy in Year 9, while treating students with respect. Such approachable teachers are a ready source of support and help when it is needed in the GCSE years, and are valued for the learning environment to which they contribute in the sixth form. Such teachers are readily consulted about personal problems. For a variety of reasons, however,

this teacher-student relationship rarely extends to negotiations about the work to be done in school.

It would appear that such teachers make the affinity easy for students to achieve. Students say that, with such teachers, they are more likely to enjoy learning. Along with the ability to self-assess and to learn independently, student affinity to teachers also makes learning easier to achieve.

Learning Repertoire

The pilot survey suggests that students feel lessons become less interesting and that teaching strategies are less varied after Year 7. Students are taught new ways of learning in Year 7, but not often thereafter. This seems to confirm the mismatch, described in Chapter 6, between what students are offered in terms of teaching strategies and what they prefer. The government's Key Stage 3 Strategy recognises the importance of the provision of a range of teaching strategies in order to engage and motivate as many students as possible.

The process of matching students' learning styles to the strategies used by teachers will be made easier by some canvass of students' views. The process described in Chapter 6 has received some endorsement by the DFES (Hopkins 2001a), but other instruments are also available. IQEA schools in Hong Kong and England have found the VAK (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) analyses useful in providing a vocabulary about learning that can be used by both teachers and students. Teachers in one school have used such an analysis to

organise different revision periods on the same material for students with different learning styles.

As well as catering for students' learning styles, the extension of students' learning repertoires is also widely advocated in order that they have as wide a range of learning strategies from which to draw for school and lifelong learning. A large number of IQEA schools have added inductive teaching, involving the categorisation of data sets, to the models of teaching and learning in routine use to deliver their curriculum. Schools have also refined models in current use, like co-operative group work and whole class teaching. This has involved schooling students in ways of working effectively, for example, in groups.

Teachers will be more convinced of the efficacy of new teaching models if they believe they will improve student learning outcomes. While there is a large body of such research on the effectiveness of co-operative group work, there is less research on less commonly used models like inductive teaching. Given the government's current concern with engaging and motivating students, more research is needed on which models of teaching and learning students enjoy.

Where students acquire the vocabulary for describing their learning, they are in a position to evaluate how well they have learnt. There is some evidence that such assessments are routine in a few IQEA schools. There is less evidence that teachers are inviting students' evaluation of how well they feel they have

been taught. In terms of consulting student opinion, of developing student self-assessment skills, and of building authentic relationships with students, such a development might be useful.

Orientation to Learning

The pilot survey suggests students tend not to look forward to lessons. Boys look forward to them less than girls, appear to work less hard in school and at home and feel that hard work is rewarded less than girls.

Part of the lack of enjoyment of some lessons appears to stem from a lack of awareness on the part of students of why they are studying a particular subject. Teachers need periodically to justify the place of their subject within the school curriculum. The notion that a subject is of value only in terms of its usefulness in future employment needs to be countered. Teachers need to justify the homework they give in terms of extending students' skills and knowledge. This requires homework to be set that addresses these purposes. Teachers might want to initiate a debate with students on the optimum working conditions in which to do homework, bearing in mind that opportunities for their provision may vary from household to household.

Teachers would also appear to need to pay particular attention to explaining the work to be done in lessons. Good teacher explanation appears to maintain the self-esteem of those students who feel they are already 'good' at a subject, and retains the engagement of those who are less confident of their ability.

In the same way that subjects and homework require periodic justification, so too do the range of teaching strategies employed by teachers. For example, given that a large proportion of students judge whether a lesson is 'good' by the presence of an element of 'hands-on', practical activity, it may be necessary to explain why such an element is missing in a particular lesson. Such justification contributes to the student-teacher debate on teaching and learning which has been suggested is essential to the development of a student's learning capacity.

Students in a number of the case study schools agree that 'good' lessons contain elements of fun, 'hands-on' and practical activities in a friendly environment characterised by good teacher-student relations. Students suggest that not only do such lessons engage their interest, but that they also motivate them to work harder. It would make sense for teachers to integrate these elements into a large proportion of their lessons.

Merit systems seem to work well with Year 7 students, less well with Year 8 ones and less well again with students in Year 9. While students studying for GCSE appear to be motivated by their desire to do well in examinations, there remains a problem with motivating Year 9 students. There appears to be little research on effective rewards and sanctions in Secondary schools. Many schools persist in reward systems that have fallen into discredit with students by Year 9. It has been consistently argued throughout this thesis that involving students in their learning and the running of their school enhances their commitment to learning: there needs to be more research into rewards systems

which students have had some say in devising. Similarly, the identification of good practice in involving students in establishing rules and codes of conduct in schools would promote this cause.

It has been suggested that students are sometimes motivated to work hard by many things - *inter alia* reward systems, what they regard as 'good' lessons, being 'good' at a subject, good understanding achieved by good teacher explanation. Some students appear to respond well to teacher and parental press.

However, the findings from the various case studies confirm the view expressed in the research literature on student orientation to learning that Secondary teachers cannot automatically assume that their students appreciate the value and worth of studying, and working hard at, their particular subjects. Both the review and the research suggest that students carry attitudes towards subjects that are often based on their own perceptions of their ability, on their own views of how 'useful' a particular subject will be in whatever career they eventually choose or whatever kind of life they will choose to lead, on how a subject is taught and even on their attitudes towards a particular teacher. This amplifies the need to justify subject areas on a regular basis to students in order that they share with teachers an awareness of why they are undertaking a particular learning activity. It would include the justification of homework tasks as an important part of that awareness. This facility of overview of the curriculum has the same importance as equipping students in the skills of self-assessment and of learning, including learning independently. Students who

appreciate the significance and importance of what they are doing, and who are motivated to do it, are more likely to show a positive orientation to learning.

Adjustment to School

The pilot survey suggests that most students feel that their teachers are firm but fair, that they see the sense of most school rules and adhere to them and that their school attendance is good. The importance of a well-regulated learning environment seems to be stressed by all teachers and most students. Students in the case study schools confirm the status accorded to school rules by students in the literature as an essential safeguard against a lack of order. These rules do not appear to be an issue in determining how well most students adjust to their school environment. Support and interest at home, and attitudes towards facilities, friendships, teachers, subjects and teaching and learning appear to be far more important determining factors.

A minority of students, in the perceptions of their peers and on their own admission, seem to be intrinsically disruptive. Another small group appears happy to join in when any disruptive behaviour goes unchecked. Most students, not merely those who have been identified or have identified themselves as disruptive, appear to take part in misbehaviour from time to time. This misbehaviour in most cases appears to consist of talking when unsolicited by the teacher. The main triggers of such talking are lessons where the content, method of presentation or method of learning, or all three, lead to disengagement. The teacher deems talking disruptive because it disrupts the

method of delivery in use at the particular time when students start talking, for example where the teacher is addressing the class.

A teacher's reactions to such disruption are also important in terms of students' attitudes towards that particular teacher and, as was reported in some case study schools, in long-term attitudes towards the teacher's subject. Where talking has arisen because of student disengagement, the teacher clearly can do much to remedy the situation. While adjustments to the curriculum are more difficult to negotiate, it has been suggested elsewhere in this work that teachers can introduce a wider range of teaching strategies into their classrooms, and that students can be asked about which methods of learning they prefer. Where teachers fail to deal effectively with student disengagement, then they risk serial misbehaviour in their lessons, and the complete breakdown of effective teaching and learning. The removal/suspension of the intrinsically disruptive from lessons given by such teachers will do little to restore the engagement of the majority of students.

Where it has been suggested that rules are regarded as a *sine qua non* by most students for life in school, it has also been suggested that they are generally accepted even when imposed unilaterally by school staff. While there are only a few examples from IQEA schools of teachers negotiating codes of conduct with their students, we have continued to argue within the project that some element of consultation is an important element in establishing the learning autonomy which has been a central theme of this work. If schools are increasingly regarding their students as partners in developing student learning,

and it is our perception within IQEA that they are, then it seems logical that students should be seen as partners in laying down the behaviour codes that are to regulate the learning community. In our best schools this is already happening (Jackson et al. 1998).

Involving the Student Voice

Within IQEA, it has been a basic premise that the administration of the various surveys carries with it some responsibility, if the whole process is not to be dismissed as a complete waste of time by those being consulted:

> *The mapping techniques entail an imperative which requires, not just a response, but a particular kind of response. The questioners are bound by the authenticity of their authority not just to listen, but to listen with care and respect and to reply in ways which acknowledge and demonstrate the legitimacy of standpoints other than their own.*
>
> *(Fielding 1995)*

It remains a point of concern within the IQEA Project that, although the school project co-ordinators routinely feed back the results of the Management and Classroom (Teacher) Conditions Surveys to staff, schools do not feed back the results of the Student Conditions Survey to students. Many schools do not have the appropriate forum in which such results can be fed back and discussed, for example a Student Council, but many increasingly do. We believe that the main reason for such reticence is that the planning of teaching experiences in the classroom is still regarded as the exclusive concern of teachers. One of the main lessons to be drawn from this thesis is that it is not.

Using the work of Thiessen (Thiessen 1997, Thiessen 1998) and Fielding (Fielding 2001), it is possible to build a continuum of teacher responses to researching the student voice. This continuum is presented in Figure 29. At one extreme, there is no research undertaken which involves canvassing the views of students. While teachers may feel some responsibility in developing the learning repertoire of their students, they regard the delivery of the curriculum as solely their own responsibility. Students are 'passive absorbers of received knowledge', and feel they have no voice in the school.

Further along the continuum, students are regarded as data sources. Research is organised by staff on issues primarily of interest to staff, and the findings of the research are rarely fed back to the students themselves. The findings may be acted upon by staff, or they may not be. Teaching and learning is still very much in the control of the teachers. Many of the schools within the IQEA project fall into this category.

Even further along, and at some distance from the last category in terms of their attitudes towards their students, are schools that undertake research using students, but that feed back the results in order to initiate a debate with the student body on the findings and issues raised. The research agenda is still very much dictated by the teachers, but there is some acknowledgement that students have a contribution to make to the improvement of teaching and learning in the school beyond responding to surveys. What these schools are

prepared to do is to seek amplification of responses given in the Survey, in order to inform further their planning processes.

A fourth category sees schools where teachers and students co-research teaching and learning issues. As in the case of an American west coast research collaborative involving both groups, the focus of research is generally selected by the teachers (Blum 1997, Shaughnessy and Kushman 1997). Where students interview students, research is more likely to present "their authentic voice" and less likely "to be refracting their meanings through the lens of [teachers'] own interests and concerns" (Rudduck et al. 1996, quoted in Cooper and Fielding 1998).

At the end of the continuum are the schools where the subject of school research is "in the collective control of the students themselves" (Fielding 2001). Students research their own areas of concern, while teachers in the school research theirs. The co-research process described in the fourth category also takes place, the difference being that teachers and students work in teams on topics chosen by the students as well as by the teachers. One such school within the IQEA network has set up a *Students as Researchers* project (Jackson et al. 1998, Fielding 2001), and one or two others are following its example. In one of these schools, students feed back to staff, senior management and governors' meetings and have given presentations at national and international research conferences. The school holds it own annual Student Voice Conference, which attracted 300 student delegates in 2000 (Jackson et al. 1998).

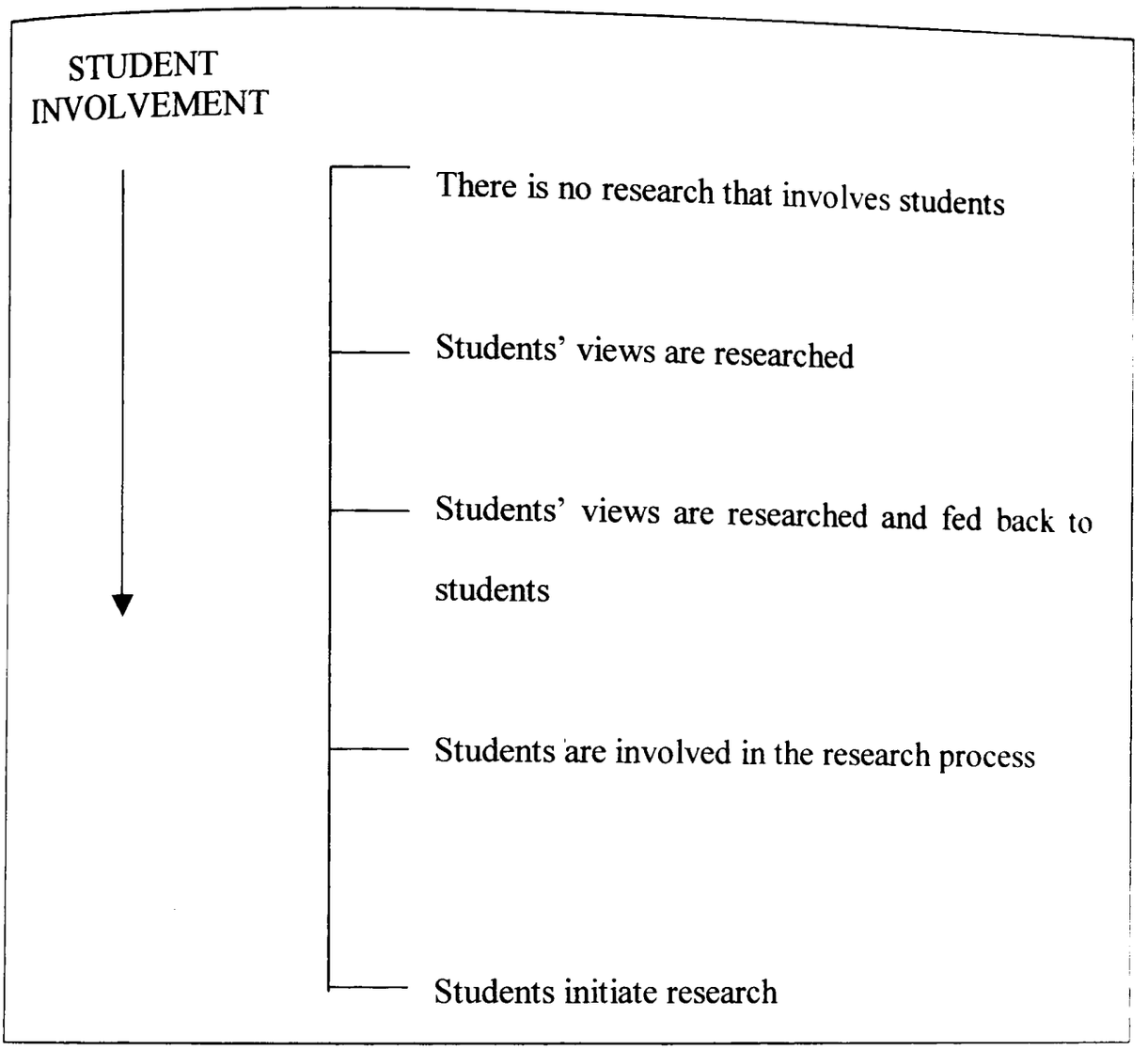


Figure 29 Continuum of student involvement in school-based research

These five stations on what I have called the continuum of student involvement in school-based research in effect describe five distinctive sets of teacher attitudes to the role of students in school improvement. They also suggest five discrete cultures, defined in terms of the extent of student participation in the design of their teaching and learning experiences. In that respect they provide useful indicators to all of those involved in the process of school improvement – be they teachers, students or external consultants – of the various stages of student involvement in school improvement.

The fourth and fifth stations described above owe as much to following principles of democratic involvement in the running of schools as they do to skilling students as learners. The sets of attitudes described in each send out the strongest possible message that students' views are integral to the effective running of schools. They acknowledge the importance of a harmonious and focused student community as a factor in school improvement (see Hargreaves 2001). But the systems they describe are time-consuming, may take students out of the classroom and require a great deal of organisation. As the consultant to the *Students as Researchers* project mentioned in the fifth category concedes, teachers researching and presenting the student voice may be the only option available for most schools (Fielding and Cooper 1998). From the standpoint of this chapter, a shift to station three would represent a massive sea change in their regard for students' views for most schools.

Coda: Changing the Culture of the Classroom and the School

This thesis has derived an instrument that can be used to assess students' views on the classroom conditions necessary for school improvement to take place. In so doing, it has been necessary to reconceptualise the classroom conditions described elsewhere (for example, in Hopkins et al. 1997a) in order that they are recognisable to students. These original conditions describe a culture of teacher collaboration and enquiry into effective teaching and learning. Inasmuch as they describe teacher behaviours, they are grounded firmly within the teacher community. In effect, they describe the culture relating to teacher activity in the school and classroom.

What has been described as the student conditions describes a set of behaviours firmly grounded within the student community. The complementary nature of many of these behaviours when compared with the corresponding list of teacher behaviours is unsurprising, given that both teachers and students engage in the classroom in the processes of teaching and learning. What this thesis has argued is that, just as schools can develop their own management capacity and their staff's teaching capacity for school improvement, it is also possible to develop students' learning capacity in order that more effective learning can take place. In the first part of this chapter the systemic changes necessary to develop this learning capacity were described. In this section the culture needed to sustain this development both in the school and in the classroom is outlined.

Because of the changes in communications technology and workplace practices described earlier in this work, there are different expectations of students on their emergence from the period of compulsory schooling. They are expected to be numerate, literate and to have a basic general knowledge related to the society in which they live. The sustained improvement in public examination results throughout the 1990s and into the new century suggests that the English educational system is comparatively proficient in equipping students to meet these expectations. Students are also expected to be adaptable to change, to be able to work effectively in teams, to be multi-skilled, to want to learn and to know how to learn. A great deal of educational research, including that related to this thesis, suggests that the system is less successful in these areas.

These changing expectations require a change, or rather an adjustment, of role for teachers. As well as communicating a discrete body of knowledge, teachers need to teach students how to learn. Such a change of role requires the systemic changes in the classroom described in the opening section of this chapter. But it also requires a change in the way teachers regard students, and subsequently in the way students regard themselves. In essence it requires a change in the culture of the classroom and the school.

Schools currently have a statutory obligation to deliver the National Curriculum, they are inspected on their ability to deliver that curriculum, and their students are regularly tested on their knowledge of the curriculum. This systems model has largely concentrated on inputs and outputs, and generally ignored the internal processes involved. It might be argued that government has appeared to be more concerned with the short-term results that the system can achieve than with the ways in which they have been achieved. This thesis has suggested that a focus on process is important in the development of the autonomous, multi-skilled and motivated learners that society and the workplace require now and in the future. The Advanced Skills and Key Stage 3 Strategies are belated acknowledgements by the government that teaching about the processes of learning is at least as important as what is learnt.

This required shift from an exclusive preoccupation with the delivery of the National Curriculum to learning about how to learn requires a change in the culture of the school and of the classroom. Education needs to become a joint

venture of teacher and student to find ever more effective ways of learning, ways which expand students' learning repertoire as well as meet students' individual learning needs and styles. It needs to become a joint venture that seeks to harness new technology, new knowledge and the new ways of communicating knowledge to student learning. Education needs to become something done *with* students rather than *to* them.

It is a joint venture because it requires, as suggested earlier in this chapter, an ongoing dialogue about teaching and learning between teachers and students. The dialogue is ongoing as teachers accommodate new knowledge and fresh approaches to teaching and learning within their own repertoire, and try these new models with their students. It requires teachers and students to develop a language of teaching and learning to enable such a dialogue to take place, and it requires teachers to instruct students in various learning methods. Students need to be able to develop their own understanding and meaning about what and how they are taught, and become empowered in the sense that they can draw upon this understanding to pursue their own learning. They start to become autonomous learners. As the awareness of students in these fields grows, teachers are able to evaluate with them the various strategies being used to facilitate their learning. Students become critical and reflective learners, but with a criticism born of knowledge and self-knowledge rather than malice.

It is but a short step to give students some say in the circumstances in which they learn, and to involve them in formulating the codes of conduct that regulate the learning process. Rules systems need to become the subject of

negotiation rather than imposition. Paying heed to student views involves teachers in giving space and paying attention to dissident voices, and respecting difference. Where such differences are aired, students have less cause to complain about the injustices and inequities of systems to which they have been able to contribute, for example in the formulation of codes of classroom conduct. Such codes are less likely to be transgressed where they have been the subject of discussion and justification involving both students and teachers. Concurring with the views of another writer on students' control of their own learning, it is clear that such

> *Democratic participation in school ... presents an immense challenge, not only to teachers' own sense of professionalism but also with and for the students themselves.*
>
> (Crozier 1999)

Students need to move from being passive absorbers of received knowledge to a group actively involved in, and taking some responsibility for, its own education. An ongoing and informed dialogue between teachers and students about learning and the circumstances in which that learning takes place is an overt symbol of respect for the authenticity of the student voice, but it is also a recognition of student investment in the conduct of their learning. That investment can be assumed to entail a commitment to negotiated codes of conduct relating to the processes of student learning. Where such a commitment exists, teachers and students can also negotiate sanctions for when such codes are transgressed, for example when homework is not done.

It is apparent from the case studies related to this work that many students would welcome such types of active involvement. It is also apparent, from our limited experience in IQEA schools of such active student involvement in their own learning, that teachers have nothing to fear from the comments on teaching of a well-informed student body In such circumstances, comments have been insightful regarding pedagogy, as well as accepting of the need for some regulation in the conduct of teaching and learning (see Beresford 1999c, Stokes 1999).

In such a culture, teachers facilitate their students' "progression in responsibility and autonomy" (Rudduck 1998). They contextualise work, they explain and routinely justify methods of teaching and learning in the classroom, they become apologists for the National Curriculum, they discuss success criteria with students and they take part in a joint evaluation of their own as well as of students' work. In such a classroom, " imposed change through the authority of the teacher" is replaced by an exploration of "the need for change with the pupils themselves" (Rudduck and Flutter 2000). Teachers continue to explore with their colleagues innovative ways of teaching, present these to students whilst coaching them in the necessary skills required to take full advantage of them, and feed back their own and their students' evaluation of them as teaching and learning techniques. Hence the activity associated with the culture of the teacher community in an improving school will enrich and sustain the learning culture of the student community.

The contention of this section, and indeed of the whole thesis, echoes the sentiment of a veteran school improver elsewhere:

> *Change will not occur unless there is an alteration of power relationships among those in the system and within the classroom.*
>
> (Sarason 1990: xiv)

The power relation relates to a necessary change of regard by teachers towards their students. The needs of current and future society for citizens and workers who are adaptable, multi-skilled and able and willing to access sources of knowledge can best be met by fundamental changes in the way that students are educated. Some of these changes are currently being introduced. But they also require a concomitant change in the way teachers and students interact. Teaching has to embrace "much more openness and reciprocity" (Fielding 2001), and students have to take a shared responsibility for the success of teaching and learning in the classroom. Our own research within IQEA, as well as research elsewhere (Barsby 1991, Connolly 1997, Thiessen 1997), suggests that this process can start before Secondary education, and indeed as early as Key Stage 1. As school improvers, we need to focus our efforts upon the empowerment of students. We need to help schools move from station to station along the continuum of student involvement. The journey through the educational system needs to be one of increasing autonomy and learning independence for the student. As teachers help students in this journey, they learn new ways of teaching and learning which feed into the students' growth process. Education becomes a joint venture where teachers and their students grow together.

REFERENCES

Adams, S. (1987) Tutor Ascendency *(sic)* and Tutoring Relationships. *Pastoral Care*, June, p. 125-129.

Adey, K. and Biddulph, M. (2000) Pupil Perceptions and Subject Choice at 14+ in Geography and History. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Cardiff, September.

Ahier, J., Cosin, B. and Hales, M. (Eds.) (1996) *Diversity and Change: Education, Policy and Selection*. London, New York: Routledge with the Open University.

Ainley, J. and Bourke, S. (1992) Student views of primary schooling. *Research Papers in Education,* 7 (2), p. 107-128.

Ainscow, M., Hargreaves, D., Hopkins, D., Balshaw, M. and Black-Hawkins, K. (1994a) *Mapping Change in Schools. The Cambridge Manual of Research Techniques. First Edition.* Cambridge: Institute of Education.

Ainscow, M., Hopkins, D., Southworth G. and West, M. (1994b) *Creating the Conditions for School Improvement.* London: David Fulton Publishers.

Ainscow, M. and Southworth, G. (1995) School Improvement: A Study of the Roles of Leaders and External Consultants. Mimeo, University of Cambridge Institute of Education.

Ainscow, M., Beresford, J., Harris, A., Hopkins, D., Southworth, G. and West, M. (2000) *Creating the Conditions for School Improvement.* London: David Fulton Publishers. 2nd edition.

Aitkin, M., Bennett, S. N. and Hesketh, J. (1981) Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress: A Re-Analysis. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 51, p. 170-186.

Alexander, R. (1991) *Primary Education in Leeds. Briefing and Summary.* Leeds: School of Education, University of Leeds.

Alexander, R., Rose, J. and Woodhead, C. (1992) *Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools. A discussion paper.* London: DES.

Altrichter, H. and Posch, P. (1989) Does the 'Grounded Theory' Approach offer a Guiding Paradigm for Teacher Research? *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 19 (1), p. 21-31.

Arnot, M., Gray, J., James, M., Rudduck, J. with Duveen, G. (1998) *Recent Research on Gender and Educational Performance.* London: The Stationery Office (for OFSTED).

Assessment Reform Group (1999) *Assessment for Learning. Beyond the black box.* Cambridge: The Assessment Reform Group.

Audit Commission (1989) *Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: The LEA of the Future.* London: HMSO.

Barber, M. (1995) A strategy for success. *Education Guardian,* 7 March.

Barber, M. (1996a) The eye of the storm. *Education Guardian,* 30 January.

Barber, M. (1996b). *The Learning Game. Arguments for an Education Revolution.* London: Victor Gollancz.

Barber, M., Denning, T., Gough, G. and Johnson, M. (1994) *Urban Education Initiatives: The national pattern.* A report for OFSTED. Keele University.

Barnett, T. (1985) Pupil Personality and Styles of Teaching. *Pastoral Care,* 3 (3), p. 207-215.

Barsby, J. (1991) Self Evaluation and Seven Year Olds. *Education 3-13*, 19 (1), p. 12-17.

Barth, R.S. (1996) Building a Community of Learners. Paper prepared for California School Leadership Center, 1996.

Bartolome, L. I. (1994) Beyond the Methods Fetish: Toward a Humanizing Pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*, 64 (2), p. 173-194.

Baume, D. and Baume, C. (1986) Learner, Know Thyself: Self-Assessment and Self-determined Assessment in Education. *The New Era*, 67 (3), p. 65-67.

Bell, L. and Arnold, F. (1987) Towards the introduction of staff appraisal into schools. *School Organisation*, 7 (2), p. 193-207.

Bennett, N. and Entwistle, N. (1977) Rite and Wrong: A Reply to 'A Chapter of Errors'. *Educational Research*, 19 (3), p. 217-222.

Beresford, J. (1993) Towards 'A Community of Aim'? Some aspects of the LFM Primary Pilot Scheme in Cambridgeshire. Unpublished MPhil thesis, University of East Anglia.

Beresford, J. (1995a) Classroom Conditions for School Improvement. A Literature Review. Paper prepared for ICSEI, *Learning from Each Other*, London, October.

Beresford, J. (1995b) Teacher Union Perspectives on the Management of Professionals. (Eds.) Busher, H. and Saran, R. *Managing Teachers as Professionals in Schools.* London, Philadelphia: Kogan Page. Chapter 5.

Beresford, J. (1997) Improving Reading: How Pupils' Views Can Help. *Reading*, 31(3), p. 3-8.

Beresford, J. (1998a) *Collecting Information for School Improvement.* London: David Fulton Publishers.

Beresford, J. (1998b) Target Practice. *Managing Schools Today,* 7 (4), p. 22-25.

Beresford, J. (1999a) Some reflections on the conduct and reporting of inspections in England and Sweden. Paper presented to ICSEI 99, San Antonio, January.

Beresford, J. (1999b) Matching Teaching to Learning. *The Curriculum Journal,* 10 (3), p. 321-344.

Beresford, J. (1999c) Assessment of Classroom Performance - by pupils? *Improving Schools,* 2 (2), p. 28-29.

Beresford, J. (2002) Developing Students as Effective Learners: the Student Conditions for School Improvement. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement,* issue to be decided.

Beresford, J. and Boyd, E. (1996) Lessons from Enfield. *Managing Schools Today,* 5 (9), p. 36-38.

Beresford, J. and Payne, G. (1997) Generating data for school improvement - the role of the external researcher in school improvement. Paper presented to BERA Conference, York, September.

Birmingham City Council Education Department (1994) *National Curriculum Assessment 1994: Key Stage One Results.* City Council Education Services Committee. Report of the Chief Education Officer.

Birmingham City Council Education Department (1995a) *Baseline Assessment for the Primary Phase - Autumn 1994. Analysis of Results.* City Council Education Committee. Report of the Chief Education Officer.

Birmingham City Council Education Department (1995b) *Baseline Assessment for the Primary Phase.* Birmingham City Council Education Department.

Birmingham City Council Education Department (1995c) *Baseline Assessment for the Primary Phase - Autumn 1994. Background Report.* City Council Education Department Circular 000326.

Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (1998a) *Inside the black box.* Mimeo, King's College, London.

Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (1998b) Assessment and Classroom Learning. *Assessment in Education,* 5 (1), p. 7-75.

Blair, T. (1999) *Speech to the National Association of Head Teachers Annual Conference.* Cardiff, 2 June.

Blatchford, P. and Kutnick, P. (1996) Studying Pupil Groups in Primary School Classrooms: Where is the Pedagogy? Paper presented to BERA Conference, Lancaster, 1996.

Bleach, K. (1997) Raising Boys' Achievement. Address at Cambridge Institute of Education, 9 July.

Bloomer, M. and Hodkinson, P. (2000) Learning Careers: continuity and change in young people's dispositions to learning. *British Educational Research Journal,* 26(5), p. 583-598.

Bollen, R. (1996) School effectiveness and school improvement: the intellectual and policy context. In Reynolds, D. et al. (1996) *op. cit.* Chapter 1.

Boseley, S. (1995) Early Learning. *Education Guardian*, 23 May.

Bowyer, M. (1981) The Independent Learning of a Foreign Language. *Forum.* 23 (2), p. 41-42.

Boyd, B. and Jardine, S. (1997) "Sometimes our views get lost". Listening to young people talking about school. Paper presented at BERA Conference, York, September.

Brandes, D. and Ginnis, P. (1990) *The Student-Centered School: ideas for practical visionaries.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Bright, M. (1998) Boys performing badly. *The Observer.* 4 January, p. 13.

Brophy, J. and Good, T.L. (1986) Teacher behavior and student achievement. In Wittrock, M.C. (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching*. New York: Macmillan. 3rd edition, Chapter 12.

Brown, S. and McIntyre, D. (1993) *Making Sense of Teaching*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Budge, D. (1997) Deprived pupils left to read alone. *Times Educational Supplement,* 27 June.

CACE (Central Advisory Council for Education) (1967) *Children and their Primary Schools. Volume 1: The Report.* London: HMSO.

Caldas, S.J. (1993) Re-examination of Input and Process Factor Effects on Public School Achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 86 (4), p. 206-214.

Callaghan, The Right Honourable J. (1976) The Ruskin College Speech. In Ahier, J., et al. (Eds.), op. cit. Chapter 10.

Campbell, I. (1993) Disaffected School Students. *Forum*, 35 (3), p. 89-90.

Campbell, J. (2000) Pupil self-assessment in science. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Cardiff, September.

Campbell, R. (1986), Social Relationships in Hearing Children Read. *Reading.* 20 (3), p. 157-167.

Carlin, P.C. (1995) Human Resource Management: one essential key to School Effectiveness and Improvement. Paper delivered to ICSEI, Leeuwarden, January.

Castelijns, J. (1996) Responsive instruction to enhance young children's task motivation. Paper presented to BERA Conference, Lancaster, September.

Chaplain, R. (1996a) Pupils under pressure: coping with stress at school. (Eds.) Rudduck, J., et al. *op. cit., Chapter* 9.

Chaplain, R. (1996b) Making a strategic withdrawal: disengagement and self-worth protection in male pupils. (Eds.) Rudduck, J., et al. *op. cit.*, Chapter 8.

Christie, D., Warden, D., Cheyne. B., Fitzpatrick, H. and Reid, K. (1999) Promoting Children's Social Competence in Schools. Paper presented at ECER, Lahti, September.

Clarke, D.F. (1991) The Negotiated Syllabus: what is it and how is it likely to work? *Applied Linguistics*, 12 (1), p. 13-28.

Claxton, G. (1995) What kind of learning does self-assessment drive? Developing a 'nose' for quality: comments on Klenowski. *Assessment in Education,* 2 (3), p. 339-343.

Cockett, M. (1996) Improving attendance and reducing disaffection: Finding strategies which last. Paper presented to BERA Conference, Lancaster, September 1996.

Coleman, P. and Collinge, J. (1998) The Good Teacher: A Student Perspective. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester.

Comber, C. (1999) Over the Moon? Evaluation of the Pilot Phase of the Leicester City Football Club Study Support Centre. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Brighton, September.

Consortium on Chicago School Research (1995) *Charting Reform: Chicago Teachers Take Stock.* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Consortium on Chicago School Research (1996) *Charting Reform in Chicago: The Students Speak.* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Cooper, P. and McIntyre, D. (1995) The crafts of the classroom: teachers' and students' accounts of the knowledge underpinning creative teaching and learning in classrooms. *Research Papers in Education,* 10 (2), p. 181-216.

Cooper, P. and Fielding, M. (1998) The Issue of Student Voice. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester, January.

Corbett, F., Fielding, M. and Kerfoot, S. (1996) The Role of the Local Education Authorities in school improvement in the future: The key contribution of LEA Advisers. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Lancaster, September.

Corno, L. and Snow, R.E. (1986) Adapting Teaching to Individual Differences Among Learners. In Wittrock, M.C. (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching.* 3rd edition. Chapter 21. New York: Macmillan.

Cox, C.B. and Boyson, R. (Eds.) (1975) *Black Paper 1975. The Fight for Education.* London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

Cox, C.B. and Boyson, R. (Eds.) (1977) *Black Paper 1977.* London: Maurice Temple Smith Ltd.

Creemers, B. P. M. (1994) *The Effective Classroom.* London, New York: Cassell.

Croll, P. (1986) *Systematic Classroom Observation.* London and Philadelphia: The Falmer Press.

Crozier, G. (1999) School Students' Control Over their Own Learning: a novel idea or radical alternative? Paper presented at BERA, Brighton, September.

Cullingford, C. (1987) Children's Attitudes to Teaching Styles. *Oxford Review of Education,* 13 (3), p. 331-339.

Cullingford, C. (1988) School rules and children's attitudes to discipline. *Educational Research,* 30 (1), p. 3-8.

Cunliffe, A. (1995) How do my students believe they learn? Paper presented at Conference of Australian Science Teachers' Association.

Dalin, P. (1994) How Schools Improve: Executive Summary. From Dalin, P. *How Schools Improve,* p. ix-xx. London, New York: Cassell.

Dalin, P. (1998) *School Development. Theories and Strategies.* London, New York: Cassell.

Daniels, S. and Welford, G. (1990) Self-assessment: Pleasant Surprise or Harsh Reality? *Evaluation and Research in Education,* 4 (1), p. 1-10.

Dann, R. (1996) Pupil Self-Assessment in the Primary Classroom. A Case for Action. *Education 3-13,* October, p. 55-59.

D'Arcy, P. (1981) Putting Your Own Mind to it. *Forum,* 23 (2), p. 38-40.

Davies, B. and Ellison, L. (1995) Improving the Quality of Schools - ask the clients? *School Organisation,* 15 (1), p. 5-12.

Davies, J. and Brember, I. (1999) Gender and Attitudes to School in Years 2 and 6: a five year longitudinal study. Paper presented at BERA Conference, Brighton, September.

Day, C. (2000) Effective Leadership and Reflective Practice. *Reflective Practice,* 1 (1), p. 113-127.

Day, C., Harris, A., Hadfield, M., Tolley, H. and Beresford, J. (2000) *Leading Schools in Times of Change.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Day, J. (1996) The Reckoning. In Rudduck et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.* Chapter 12.

De Pear, S. (1997) Excluded pupils' views of their educational needs and experiences. *Support for Learning,* 12 (1), p. 19-22.

DES (1991) *News, 412/91. Primary Education - A Statement by Secretary of State for Education and Science, Kenneth Clarke*, 3rd December.

DFE (1994) GEST 1995-6: Schools with Serious Weaknesses. Letter to LEAs, 5 December.

DFEE (1997a) *Education action zones. An introduction.* UK: DFEE.

DFEE (1997b) *Excellence in schools. Cm 3681.* London: The Stationery Office Limited.

DFEE (1998a) *The National Literacy Strategy.* UK: DFEE.

DFEE (1998b) *Teachers meeting the challenge of change.* London: The Stationery Office Limited.

DFEE (1999) *The National Numeracy Strategy. Framework for teaching mathematics from Reception to Year 6.* UK: DFEE.

DFEE (2001a) *Schools Building On Success.* London: The Stationery Office Limited.

DFEE (2001b) Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Subjects. www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/leystage3/strands/tlf/

DFEE (2001c) *Best Practice Research Scholarships.* Nottingham: DFEE.

DFEE/OFSTED (1996) *Setting Targets to Raise Standards: A Survey of Good Practice.* UK: DFEE.

Doddington, C., Flutter, J. and Rudduck, J. (1999) *Improving Learning: The Pupils' Agenda. A Report for primary schools.* Cambridge: Homerton College. April.

Dolan, L and Berryman, K. (1994) Roots and Wings: Universal Excellence in Elementary Education. Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

Donahoe, T. (1993) Finding the Way: Structure, Time, and Culture in School Improvement. *Phi Delta Kappan*, December, p. 298-305.

Edwards, R. (1989) An experiment in student self-assessment. *British Journal of Educational Technology,* 20 (1), p. 5-10.

Ekholm, M. and Kull, M. (1996) School Climate and Educational Change: Stability and Change in Nine Swedish Schools. *EERA Bulletin*, July, p. 3-11.

Eland, S., Jackson, P. and Johnston, J. (1995) Parental Interaction in Primary School Science Workshops and the subsequent development of positive attitudes to Science. Paper presented at ECER, Bath, September.

Elliott, J. (1984) Improving the Quality of Teaching Through Action-Research. *Forum,* 26 (3), p. 74-77.

Elliott, J. (1997) 'Disaffected pupils': perspectives on the problem. Paper presented to BERA Conference, York, September.

Elliott (Jim) and Punch, K. (1991) The Social Adjustment of Newcomers in Secondary School. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 19 (2), p. 160-176.

Epstein, J. L. and McPartland, J. M. (1976) The Concept and Measurement of the Quality of School Life. *American Educational Research Journal*, 13 (1), p. 15-30.

Faccenda, J. and Fielding, M. (1992) *Learning Styles in FE.* Model-making Colleges.

Fielding, M. (1994), Valuing difference in teachers and learners: building on Kolb's learning styles to develop a language of teaching and learning. *The Curriculum Journal*, 5 (3), p. 393-417.

Fielding, M. (1995) Mapping The Progress Of Change. Paper presented at the BERA/ECER Annual Conference, Bath, September.

Fielding, M. (1997) Beyond School Effectiveness and School Improvement: Lighting the Slow Fuse of Possibility. *The Curriculum Journal*, 8 (1), p. 7-27.

Fielding, M. (1999a) Target Setting, Policy Pathology and Student Perspectives: learning to labour in new times. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 29 (2), p. 277-287.

Fielding, M. (1999b) Taking Education Really Seriously: two years hard labour. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 29 (2), p. 173-181. Editorial.

Fielding, M. and Cooper, P. (1998) Voice, Educational Research and the Management of Meaning. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester, January.

Flutter, J., Rudduck, J., Addams, H., Johnson, M. and Maden, M. (1999) *Improving Learning: The Pupils' Agenda. A report for secondary schools.* Cambridge: Homerton College. April.

Frost, D. (1993) Starting Secondary School: The Parents' Perspective. *Pastoral Care in Education,* 11 (4), p. 6-11.

Fullan, M. (1982) *The Meaning of Educational Change.* New York and London: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1994) The School as a Learning Organisation: Distant Dreams. Paper prepared for *Theory into Practice.*

Galloway, D., Leo, E., Rogers, C. and Armstrong, D. (1995) Motivational styles in English and mathematics among children identified as having special educational needs. *British Journal of Educational Psychology,* 65, p. 477-487.

Gibbs, S.E. (1989) The Final Frontier. Independent Learning and the Role of the Library. *School Librarian,* 37 (1), p. 10-11.

Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Gipps, C. (1992) *What We Know About Effective Primary Teaching.* London: The Tufnell Press.

Gipps, C. and Tunstall, P. (1997) Effort, ability and the teacher: young children's explanations for success and failure. Paper presented at BERA Conference, York, September.

Gipps, C. and Tunstall, P. (1998) Effort, ability and the teacher: young children's explanations for success and failure. *Oxford Review of Education,* 24 (2), p. 149-165.

Gold, K. (1998) It's wonderful, give it a sticker. *Guardian Education,* 14 July.

Gonzalez, G. and Gilbert, J. (1979) 'A' Level Physics by use of an Independent Learning Approach: some case studies of classroom interaction. *British Educational Research Journal,* 5 (2), p. 185-196.

Gonzalez, G. and Gilbert, J. (1980) 'A' Level Physics by the Use of an Independent Learning Approach: the role of the lab-work. *British Educational Research Journal*, 6 (1), p. 63-83.

Good, T. L. and Brophy, J. E. (1978) *Looking in Classrooms.* New York: Harper and Row. 2nd edition.

Gracie, M. (1981) Closely Observed Children. *Forum,* 23 (2), p. 42-44.

Granstrom, K. and Lander, R. (Eds.) (1999) *Studies and reflections on school inspection in England and Sweden.* Report commissioned by the Skolverket. Stockholm, June.

Grant, L. (1996) Under Pressure. *Guardian,* 11 March.

Gray, J., Hopkins, D., Reynolds, D., Wilcox, B., Farrell, S. and Jesson, D. (1999) *Improving Schools. Performance and Potential.* Buckingham. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Hacker, R. G. and Carter, D. S. G. (1987) Teaching Processes in Social Studies Classrooms and Prescriptive Instructional Theories. *British Educational Research Journal,* 13 (3), p. 261-269.

Haggarty, L. and Postlethwaite, K. (1995) Working as Consultants on School-based Teacher-identified Problems. *Educational Action Research*, 3 (2), p.169-181.

Hague, S.A. and Walker, C. (1996) Creating Powerful Learning Opportunities for all Children: The Development and Use of a Self-Monitoring Checklist for Teachers. Paper presented at AERA Annual Conference, New York.

Hannay, T. and Ross, L. (1999) Internalising Change Capacity in Secondary Schools through Organisational Change. Mimeo, Ontario Ministry of Education and Training.

Hansen, D. T. (1993) The moral importance of the teacher's style. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 25* (5), p. 397-421.

Hargreaves, A. (1995) Renewal in the Age of Paradox. *Educational Leadership,* April, p. 114-119.

Hargreaves, A. (1997) From Reform to Renewal: A New Deal for a New Age. In (Eds.) Hargreaves, A. and Evans, R., *Beyond Educational Reform. Bringing Teachers Back In.* Buckingham: Open University Press. Chapter 8.

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (1998) *What's Worth Fighting For Out There?* Australia: Australian Council for Educational Administration Inc.

Hargreaves, D., Hopkins, D., Leask, M., Connolly, J. and Robinson, P. (1989) *Planning for School Development. Advice to Governors, Headteachers and Teachers,* London: DES.

Haroun, R. and O'Hanlon, C. (1997) Do Teachers and Students Agree in their Perception of What School Discipline Is? *Educational Review,* 49 (3), p. 237-250.

Harris, A. (1995) Effective Teaching. *SIN Research Matters,* 3, Summer. London Institute of Education.

Harris, A. (1999) What Works in School Improvement? Lessons from the Field and Future Directions. In University of Nottingham, *The Challenge of School Transformation: What Works.* Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

Harris, A. and Russ, J. (1995) *Pathways to School Improvement.* Rotherham: Department of Employment.

Harry, S. and Bisiker, W. (1995) School Improvement from Within. Paper presented at ECER, Bath, September.

Haviland, J. (Ed.) (1988) *Take Care, Mr Baker!* London: Fourth Estate.

Hayes, D. (1993) The Good, The Bad, The Ugly and The Memorable: A Retrospective View of Teacher-Pupil Relationships. *Education 3-13*, 21 (1), p. 53-59.

Hayes, L. F. and Ross, D. D. (1989) Trust versus control: the impact of school leadership on teacher reflection. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 2 (4), p. 335-350.

Hayes, M. (2000) The Assessment of IT and ICT in the Early Years: Children's Views about ICT. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Cardiff, September.

Hazelwood, R. D., Fitz-Gibbon, C. and McCabe, C. (1988) Student Perception of Teaching and Learning Styles in TVEI. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, 2 (2), p. 61-68.

Hendley, G. (1978) Martin Buber on the Teacher/Student Relationship: a critical appraisal. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 12, p. 141-148.

Hickey, C. and Fitzclarence, L. (1999) Peering at the individual: Problems with trying to teach young males not to be like their peers. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Brighton, September.

Homerton-Schools Research Circle (1997) Making Your Way Through Secondary School. Research Briefing. Series 1, Number 2.

Homerton-Schools Research Circle (1999) The Challenge of Year 8. Research Briefing. Series 2, Number 3.

Hopkins, D. (1991a) Changing school culture through development planning. (Eds.) Riddell, S. and Brown, S. *School Effectiveness Research. Its Messages for School Improvement.* Edinburgh: HMSO. Chapter 6.

Hopkins, D. (1991b) A Collection of Classroom Observation Instruments. University of Cambridge Institute of Education.

Hopkins, D. (1992) The trained eye. *Managing Schools Today*, 1(6), March/April, p. 12-15.

Hopkins, D. (1994) Towards a Theory for School Improvement. Paper presented at ESRC Seminar Series on School Effectiveness and School Improvement, October (draft).

Hopkins, D. (1996) Strategies for School Development. Mimeo, University of Nottingham.

Hopkins, D. (1999a) Tensions in and Prospects for School Improvement. In University of Nottingham, *op.cit.*

Hopkins, D. (1999b) Tensions in and Prospects for School Improvement - IQEA and the White Paper *Excellence in Schools. IQEA* 1, p. 1-2. May.

Hopkins, D. (1999c) "Seeing School Improvement Whole". In University of Nottingham, *op.cit.*

Hopkins, D. (2001a) *Meeting the Challenge*. Nottingham: DFEE Standards and Effectiveness Unit.

Hopkins, D., Ainscow, M. and West, M. (1994) *School Improvement in an Era of Change*. London, New York: Cassell.

Hopkins, D., West, M. and Beresford, J. (1995) Creating the Conditions for Classroom Improvement. An Interim Report. Paper delivered at ECER, Bath, September.

Hopkins, D. and Lagerweij, N. (1996) The school improvement knowledge base. In Reynolds, D. et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.* Chapter 4.

Hopkins, D., West, M. and Ainscow, M. (1996) *Improving the Quality of Education for All: Progress and Challenge.* London: David Fulton Publishers Ltd.

Hopkins, D., West, M., Ainscow, M., Harris, A. and Beresford, J. (1997a) *Creating the Conditions for Classroom Improvement.* London: David Fulton Publishers Ltd.

Hopkins, D., Harris, A. and Jackson, D. (1997b) Understanding the School's Capacity for Development: growth states and strategies. *School Leadership and Management,* 17 (3), p. 401-411.

Hopkins, D., West, M. and Beresford, J. (1998) Creating the Conditions for Classroom and Teacher Development. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice,* 4 (1), p. 115-141.

Hopkins, D. and MacGilchrist, B. (1998) Development Planning for Pupil Achievement. *School Leadership and Management,* 18 (3), p. 409-424.

Hopkins, D. and Harris, A. (2000) *Creating the Conditions for Teaching and Learning.* London: Fulton Publishers.

Hopkins, D. and Levin, B. (2000) Government Policy and School Development. *School Leadership and Management,* 20 (1), p. 15-30.

Hord, S.M. (1997) Speaking with High School Students in the Southwest. In Restructuring Collaborative *Look Who's Talking Now. Student Views of Learning in Restructuring Schools.* Portland: Regional Educational Laboratory Network, Chapter 4.

House, E., Lapan, S. and Mathison, S. (1989) Teacher Inference. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 19 (1), p. 53-58.

Howley, C.B. (1989) Synthesis of the effects of school and district size: What research says about achievement in small schools and school districts. *Journal of Rural and Small Schools*, 4 (1), p. 2-12.

Hubbard, G. (1997) Pupil-managed co-operative learning: why and how pupils interact and co-operate. Paper presented at BERA Conference, York, September.

Hughes, P. (1994) Implications for Curriculum Reform from OECD Associated Projects. In OECD, *op cit.*, Paper 13.

Hughes, P. and Skilbeck M. (1994) Curriculum Reform – Recent Trends and Issues. In OECD, *op cit.*, Paper 1.

Jackson, D. (1999) Reconceptualising School Development - One School's Experience. In University of Nottingham, *op. cit.*

Jackson, D. (2000) The School Improvement Journey: perspectives on leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 20 (1), p. 61-78.

Jackson, D., Raymond, L., Weatherill, L. and Fielding, M. (1998) Students as Researchers. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester, January.

James, M. and Arnot, M. (1998) Boys and Girls and the Demands of Learning in Schools Today. *Cambridge School of Education Newsletter* (3), Autumn and Winter.

Jeffrey, B. and Woods, P. (1997) The Relevance of Creative Teaching: Pupils' Views. In Pollard, A., Thiessen, D. and Filer, A. (Eds.) *Children and their Curriculum. The Perspectives of Primary and Elementary School Children.* London: The Falmer Press, Chapter 1.

Joyce, B. and Weil, M. (1986, 3rd edition) *Models of Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Joyce, B., Showers, B. and Rolheiser-Bennett, C. (1987) Staff Development and Student Learning: A Synthesis of Research on Models of Teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 45 (2), p.11-23.

Joyce, B., Calhoun, E. and Hopkins, D. (1997) *Models of learning - tools for teaching*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Joyce, B., Calhoun, E. and Hopkins, D. (1999) *The New Structure of School Improvement. Inquiring Schools and Achieving Students*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Kaminski, F. (1999) Semi-independent Learning: an approach to mixed-ability grouping - a case study. *Forum*, 41 (2), p. 78-82.

Katz, D. (1964) The Motivational Basis of Organisational Behaviour. In Vroom, V.H. and Deci, E.L. (Eds.) (1982 edition) *Management and Motivation. Selected Readings*. London: Penguin.

Kelly, A.V. (1974) *Teaching Mixed-ability classes: an individualised approach*. London: Harper and Row.

Kershner, R. (1996) The meaning of 'working hard' in school. (Eds.) Rudduck et al., *op.cit.*, Chapter 6.

Keys, W. and Fernandes, C. (1993) *What do students think about school?* Slough: NFER.

King Harold GMS with University of Cambridge Institute of Education (1995) *'Effective Teaching for Effective Learning' Handbook.*

Kingston, P. (1997) Lessons from Lambeth. *Guardian Education,* 7 January.

Kolb, D.A. (1984) *Experiential Learning. Experience as The Source of Learning and Development.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Kyriacou, C. (1998, 2nd edition) *Essential Teaching Skills.* Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes (Publishers) Ltd.

Labour Party (1995) *Excellence for Everyone. Labour's crusade to raise standards.* London: Labour Party.

Labour Party (1997) *New Labour. Because Britain Deserves Better.* London: Labour Party.

Lahelma, E., Hakala, K., Hynninen, P. and Lappalainen, S. (1999) 'We have far too few men!' Analysing the discussion on the need for more male teachers. Paper presented at ECER, Lahti, September.

Lander, R. and Ekholm, M. (1996) School evaluation and improvement. A Scandinavian view. *Kluwer Handbook on Educational Change.*

Lawley, P. (1999) *Target Setting and Bench Marking.* Dunstable: Folens Limited.

Leask, M. and Pachler, N. (1995) Increasing the Effectiveness of the OFSTED system: Views on forms of post-inspection support and local support structures. OFSTED Briefing Paper 1/95.

Levin, B. (1994) Improving Educational Productivity. Putting Students at the Center. *Phi Delta Kappan,* June, p. 758-760.

Levin, B. (1995) Improving Educational Productivity through a Focus on Learners. *Studies in Educational Administration,* 60, p. 15-21.

Lincoln, P. and Southworth, G. (1996) Concerted efforts. *Education*, 23 February.

Lockhart, A. (1996) Week by Week. *Education*, 26 January.

Long, R. and Pinder, D. (1995) Developing Strategies for Primary School Improvement. University College, Bretton Hall. Paper presented to ICSEI, Leeuwarden. January.

Louis, K. S., Marks, H. M. and Kruse, S. (1994) Teachers' Professional Community in Restructuring Schools. Paper prepared at the Centre on Organisation and Restructuring of Schools, University of Wisconsin- Madison.

MacBeath, J. (1998) Just think about it. *Times Educational Supplement*, 10 April.

Maden, M. and Rudduck, J. (1997) Listen to the learners. *Times Educational Supplement*, 4 July.

Maden, M. and Johnson, M. (1998) Pupil Attitude Surveys - shedding light on dark corners. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester, January.

Marzano, R.J., Arredondo, D.E., Brandt, R.S., Pickering, D.J.. Blackburn, G.J. and Moffett, C.A. (1992) *Dimensions of Learning*. Teacher's Manual. Aurora: ASCD/McREL Institute.

McCulla, N. (1995) Quality Teaching and Quality Learning: The Contribution of Training and Development in the NSW Department of School Education. *Ensuring Quality in Education: Selected Papers from the Australian College of Education National Conference, Launceston, Tasmania, 28-30 September 1994.* The Australian College of Education, Canberra.

McFee, G. (1993) Reflections on the Nature of Action-research. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 23* (2), p. 173-183.

McGuinness, C. (1999) *From Thinking Skills to Thinking Classrooms: a review and evaluation of approaches for developing pupils' thinking.* DFEE Research Report RR 115.

McLean, M. (1990) School Knowledge traditions. In Ahier, J. et al. (Eds.), *op. cit.*, Chapter 2.

Meece, J.L. and Miller, S.D. (1996) Developmental Changes in Children's Self-Reports of Achievement Goals, Competence, and Strategy Use during the

late Elementary Years. Paper presented at AERA Annual Conference, New York.

Meyer, D.K. and Turner, J.C. (1996) Reciprocal Influences on Classroom Motivation: Student Perspectives on Challenging School Work. Paper presented at AERA Annual Conference, New York.

Midgley, C. and Wood, S. (1993) Beyond Site-Based Management: Empowering Teachers to Reform Schools. *Phi Delta Kappa,* 75 (3), p. 245-252.

Miles, M. (1981) Mapping the common properties of schools. In Lehming, R. and Kane, M. (Eds.) *Improving Schools: Using What We Know.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Miller, D., Parkhouse, P., Eagle, R. and Evans, T. (1999) Pupils and the Core Subjects: A Study of the Attitudes of Some Pupils Aged 11-16. Paper presented at BERA, Brighton, September.

Moore, D.W. and Glynn, T. (1984) Variation in Question Rate as a Function of Position in the Classroom. *Educational Psychology,* 4 (3), p. 233-248.

Morgan, C. and Morris, G. (1999) *Good Teaching and Learning: Pupils and Teachers Speak.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

MORI/Campaign For Learning (1998) *Attitudes to Learning '98.* London: Campaign For Learning.

Mortimore, P. (1995) Your local critical friend. *Education,* 186 (1), 7 July, p. 12-13.

Munn, P., Johnstone, M. and Holligan, C. (1990) Pupils' Perceptions of 'Effective Disciplinarians'. *British Educational Research Journal,* 16 (2), p. 191-198.

Myers, K. (1995a) Motivate, innovate, organise. *Times Educational Supplement,* 6 October.

Myers, K. (1995b) Intensive care for the chronically sick. Paper presented at ECER, Bath, September.

NAHT (National Association of Head Teachers) / University of Nottingham (1996) *Class Size Research and the Quality of Education.* London: NAHT.

Newman, E. (1997) Children's Views of School - A Vehicle for developing Teaching Practice. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, York, September.

Newton, P. and Harwood, D. (1993) Teaching Styles and Personal and Social Education: How Far Have 'Active Learning' Strategies Permeated the Secondary Curriculum? *Pastoral Care,* 11 (1), p. 36-42.

Nisbet, J. (1994) Relating Pupil Assessment and Evaluation to Teaching and Learning. In OECD, *op. cit.*, Paper 14.

Norwich, B. (1998) Developing an inventory of children's class learning approaches. *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 14 (3), p. 147-155.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (1994) *The Curriculum Redefined: Schooling for the 21st Century.* Paris: OECD.

OFSTED (1993a) *Access and Achievement in Urban Education.* London: HMSO.

OFSTED (1993b) *The Management and Provision of Inservice Training Funded by the Grant for Education Support and Training (GEST).* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED (1993c) *Achieving Good Behaviour in Schools.* London: HMSO.

OFSTED (1995a) *Homework in Primary and Secondary Schools.* London: HMSO.

OFSTED (1995b) *Teaching Quality. The Primary Debate.* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED (1995c) *Class Size and the Quality of Education.* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED (1997) *Inspection and Re-Inspection of Schools from September 1997.* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED (1998) *Inspection '98.* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED (1999a) *Handbook for Inspecting Primary and Nursery Schools.* London: The Stationery Office.

OFSTED (1999b) *Handbook for Inspecting Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units.* London: The Stationery Office.

OFSTED (1999c) *Handbook for Inspecting Secondary Schools.* London: The Stationery Office.

OFSTED (2000) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, 1998/99.* London: The Stationery Office.

OFSTED/Audit Commission (1997) *LEA support for school improvement.* London: OFSTED.

OFSTED/Equal Opportunities Commission (1996) *The Gender Divide. Performance Differences between boys and girls at school.* London: HMSO.

O'Hanlon, C. (1991) Psychodynamic Group Theory in Action Research. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 17 (3), p. 219-223.

O'Hanlon, C. (1992) Action Research in the Professional Development of Teachers. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 7 (3), p. 204-218.

Osborn, A. and Dawson, N. (1995) Homework: A Study in Two Schools. Mimeo. University of Bristol School of Education.

Osborn, M. (1997a) When being top is not seen as best. *Times Educational Supplement*, 10 January, p. 14.

Osborn, M. (1997b) Learning, Working and Climbing the Ladder: Pupil Perspectives on Primary Schooling in England and France. Paper presented at ECER, Frankfurt am Main.

Osborne, J. and Collins, S. (1999) Pupils' and Parents' Views of the Role and Value of the Science Curriculum. Paper presented at BERA Annual Conference, Brighton, September.

Parker-Rees, R. (1997) The Tale of a Task: Learning Beyond the Map. In Pollard, A., Thiessen, D. and Filer, A. (Eds.) *Children and their Curriculum. The Perspectives of Primary and Elementary School Children.* London: The Falmer Press. Chapter 2.

Perkins. P. (1999) Mini-Targets: An Approach to Target Setting. *Improving Schools,* 2 (1), p. 16-17.

Phillimore, A.J. (1989) Flexible Specialization, work organization and skills. In Ahier, J. et al. (Eds.) *op cit.,* Chapter 6.

Phillips, A. (1993) Children's Ability to Select for Themselves Suitable Partners for Independent Learning Situations - at Age 6. *Early Years,* 13 (2), p. 40-44.

Pimenoff, S. (1995) Seeking for Truth? *Guardian Education*, 11 April.

Pratt, S.D. (1999) Movin' On Up: A Case Study of Boys Transferring to Secondary School from One Primary School. Paper presented to BERA, Brighton, September.

QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2000) *Key Skills*, www.qca.org.uk

Raynor, D. (1995) Identifying Trends in Pupil Self-assessment at different ability levels. *Pastoral Care,* June, p. 29-31.

Restructuring Collaborative (1997) *Look Who's Talking Now. Student Views of Learning in Restructuring Schools.* Portland: Regional Educational Laboratory Network.

Reynolds, D. (1995) Turning around the Ineffective Schools. Some evidence and some speculations. Paper presented at ECER, Bath, September.

Reynolds, D. and Farrell, S. (1996) *Worlds Apart? A Review of International Surveys of Educational Achievement involving England.* London: HMSO (for OFSTED).

Reynolds, D., Bollen, R., Creemers, B., Hopkins, D., Stoll, L. and Lagerweij, N. (Eds.) (1996) *Making Good Schools.* London: Routledge.

Rosenshine, B. and Stevens, R. (1986) Teaching Functions. In Wittrock, M.C. (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching.* 3rd edition. New York: Macmillan, Chapter 13.

Rowland, S. (1981) How to Intervene: Clues from the Work of a Ten Year Old. *Forum,* 23 (2), p. 33-35.

Rudduck, J. (1994) Learning the values of equity. *Independent,* 6 October.

Rudduck, J. (1995) What can pupils tell us about School Improvement? Paper presented at ICSEI, London, October.

Rudduck, J. (1996a) Getting serious: the demands of coursework, revision and examinations. In Rudduck, J., Chaplain, R. and Wallace, G. (Eds.) *op. cit.*, chapter 10.

Rudduck, J. (1996b) Lessons, subjects and the curriculum: issues of 'understanding' and 'coherence'. In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.*, Chapter 4.

Rudduck, J. (1998) Consulting students as key witnesses in school improvement: how radical is their advice? Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester, January.

Rudduck, J., Chaplain, R. and Wallace, G. (1996a) Pupil voices and school improvement. In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.,* Chapter 1.

Rudduck, J., Chaplain, R. and Wallace, G. (1996b) Reviewing the conditions of learning in school. In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.,* Chapter 13.

Rudduck, J., Chaplain, R. and Wallace, G. (Eds.) (1996c) *School Improvement: What Can Pupils Tell Us?* London: David Fulton Publishers.

Rudduck, J. and Flutter, J. (1998) *The Dilemmas and Challenges of Year 8.* Cambridge: Homerton College.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P. and Ouston, J. (1979) *Fifteen Thousand Hours*. London: Open Books.

Sammons, P., Hillman, J. and Mortimore, P. (1995) *Key Characteristics of Effective Schools. A review of school effectiveness research.* London: OFSTED.

Sarason, S.B. (1990) *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1996) *Teaching for Effective Learning.* Dundee: Scottish CCC.

Sharnbrook Upper School (1995) *Sharnbrook Learning Project. Report of Phase 1.*

Shaughnessy, J. and Kushman, J.W. (1997) Research in the Hands of Students. In Restructuring Collaborative, *op. cit.* Chapter 3.

Siann, G., Lightbody, P., Stocks, R. and Walsh, D. (1996) Motivation and Attribution at Secondary School: the role of ethnic group and gender. *Gender and Education,* 8 (3), p. 261-274.

Sizer, J. (1989 edition) *An Insight into Management Accounting.* London: Penguin Business.

Skilbeck, M. (1985) *A Core Curriculum for the Common School.* London: University of London Institute of Education.

Skilbeck, M. (1994) The Core Curriculum. In OECD. *op cit.*, Paper 7.

Slavin, R. E. (1993) Co-operative Learning in OECD Countries: Research, Practice and Prevalence. Paper for Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD, September.

Smees, R. and Thomas, S. (1998) Valuing pupils' views about school. *British Journal of Curriculum and Assessment,* 8 (3), p. 7-9.

Smith, J. (1981) The World of Childhood: a 15 Year Old's Course of Study. *Forum,* 23 (2), p. 35-37.

Smith, M. (1994) an Agenda for Reform in the USA. In OECD, *op cit.*, Paper 2.

Southworth, G. (1996) Improving Primary Schools: shifting the emphasis and clarifying the focus. *School Organisation,* 16 (3), p. 263-280.

Southworth, G. (1998) The learning school: what does it look like? *Managing Schools Today,* 7 (4), p. 29-30.

Southworth, G. and Sebba, J. (1997) Increasing the LEA's Capacity to Support Schools as they seek to improve. Paper presented to BERA Conference, York, September.

Spaulding, A. (1997) The Politics of Primaries: The Micropolitical Perspectives of 7-Year-Olds. In Pollard, A., Thiessen, D. and Filer, A. (Eds.) *Children and their Curriculum. The Perspectives of Primary and Elementary School Children.* London: The Falmer Press, Chapter 5.

Stallings, J. (1980) Allocated Academic Learning Time Revisited, or Beyond Time on Task. *Educational Researcher,* 9, p. 11-16.

Stevenson, H.W. and Stigler, J.W. (1992) *The Learning Gap.* New York: Summit Books.

Stoll, L. and Mortimore, P. (1995) School Effectiveness and School Improvement. *Viewpoint,* 2, p. 1-8.

Stoll, L., Reynolds, D., Creemers, B. and Hopkins, D. (1996) Merging school effectiveness and school improvement: practical examples. In Reynolds, D. et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.* Chapter 6.

Sutcliffe, J. (1998) Age weakens thirst for knowledge. *Times Educational Supplement,* 22 May.

Swedish National Agency for Education (1998) *Who believes in our schools?* Stockholm: Skolverket.

Taylor, T. (Chairman) (1977) *A New Partnership for Our Schools.* London: HMSO.

Testerman, J. (1996) Holding At-Risk Students. *Phi Delta Kappan,* 77 (5), p. 364-365. January.

Thiessen, D. (1998) Working with Primary pupils' perspectives to transform schools. Paper presented at ICSEI, Manchester.

Thomas, S. and Mortimore, P. (1994) Report on Value Added Analysis of 1993 GCSE Examination Results in Lancashire. Mimeo. Curriculum Studies Department, London Institute of Education.

Tomlinson, M. (1997) The devil is in the detail. *Guardian Education,* 7 January.

Towler, L. and Broadfoot, P. (1992) Self-assessment in the Primary School. *Educational Review,* 44 (2), p. 137-151.

University of Nottingham (1999) *The Challenge of School Transformation: What Works.* Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

Van Velzen, W., Miles, M., Ekholm, M., Hameyer, U. and Robin, D. (1985) *Making School Improvement Work: A Conceptual Guide to Practice.* Leuven, Belgium: ACCO.

Walker, R. and Adelman, C. (1987), *A Guide to Classroom Observation.* London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

Wallace, G. (1996a) Engaging with Learning. (Eds.) In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.,* Chapter 5.

Wallace, G. (1996b) Relating to Teachers. In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.,* Chapter 3.

Wallace, J. and Wildy, H. (1996) Old Questions for New Schools: What are the students doing? Paper presented at AERA Annual Conference, New York.

Wang, M.C., Haertel, G.D. and Walberg, H.J. (1993) Toward a Knowledge Base for School Learning. *Review of Educational Research,* 63 (3), p. 249-294.

Warrington, M. and Younger, M. (1996) Homework: dilemmas and difficulties In Rudduck, J., et al. (Eds.) *op. cit.,* Chapter 7.

Watkins, C. (1996) Managing Behaviour in Classrooms and Schools. Paper delivered at Education Show, Birmingham, March.

Weltner, K. (1977) The Development of Study Techniques by Integrated Master Programmes. *British Journal of Educational Technology,* 8 (1), p. 34-44.

West, M. (1995) Increasing quality without increasing resources - The Challenge for School Improvement. Paper prepared for Kvalitet i kommuner och landsting Konferensen: Gothenburg, October.

West, M., Hopkins, D. and Beresford, J. (1995) Conditions for School and Classroom Development. Paper delivered at ECER, Bath, September.

West, M., Ainscow, M. and Hopkins, D. (1997) Making Sense of School Development from the Inside. Paper presented at ICSEI, Memphis, January.

West, M. and Beresford, J. (1998) Issues of Equity and Diversity in Classrooms: Some of the problems confronting school improvement programmes. Paper presented at ICSEI 98, Manchester, January.

West, N. (1992), *Classroom Observation in the context of Appraisal.* Training Manual for Primary Schools. Harlow: Longman.

Weston, P. (1999) *Homework. Learning from Practice.* London: The Stationery Office (for OFSTED).

Whatford, C. (1998) Rising From the Ashes. In (Eds.) Stoll, L. and Myers, K. (Eds.) *No Quick Fixes: Perspectives on Schools in Difficulty.* London: Falmer Press, Chapter 5.

Wheldall, K., Morris, M., Vaughan, P. and Ng, Y.Y. (1981) Rows Versus Tables: an example of the use of behavioural ecology in two classes of eleven-year-old children. *Educational Psychology,* 1 (2), p. 171-184.

Wheldall, K. and Lam, Y.Y. (1987) Rows versus Tables, II. The Effects of Two Classroom Seating Arrangements on Classroom Disruption Rate, On-task Behaviour and Teacher Behaviour in Three Special School Classes. *Educational Psychology,* 7 (4), p. 303-312.

Wilby, P. (1998) This may be the end of the LEA show. *New Statesman,* 20 March, p. 24-25.

Wilson, D. (1991) Towards Independent Learning. *School Librarian,* 39 (3). p. 97.

Winston, J. (1992) Jackie, Eric and Me: A Case Study in Professional Development Within the Context of Day to Day School Relationships. *Curriculum,* 13 (2), p. 110-117.

Witter, G. (1988) To see ourselves as others see us. *Support for Learning,* 3 (2), p. 93-98.

Woodhead, C. (1992) Raise the standard bearers. *Guardian,* 11 February.

Worrall, P. (1999) An Editor Calls ... Plantsbrook School, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. *Improving Schools,* 2 (1), p. 5-10.

Wragg, C.M. (1995) Classroom Management. The Perspectives of Teachers, Pupils and Researcher. Paper presented at AERA Annual Conference, San Francisco.

Wragg, E. (1997) Countdown to the new millennium. *Guardian Education,* 8 April.

Yaakobi, D. & Sharan, S. (1985) Teacher beliefs and practices: the discipline carries the message. *Journal of Education for Teaching,* 11 (2), p. 187-199.

Yamagiwa, T. (1994) New Trends in the revised curricula in Japan. In OECD, *op cit.*, Paper 5.

Yin, R.K. (1989) *Case Study Research. Design and Methods.* London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Young, M. (1993) A curriculum for the twenty-first century? Towards a new basis for overcoming academic / vocational divisions. In Ahier, J. et al. (Eds.), *op. cit.*, Chapter 5.